

Teachings 2010 to 2000 Eckhart-Tolle-Teaching Compilation Part 5 of 8

[Speaker 1] (0:02 - 1:26:28)

And so these things become an anchor for being present. Your attention in the now. And that is the new state of consciousness that sometimes in ancient Indian teachings is called the fourth state, because there's dreamless sleep, there's the dream state, there's the ordinary waking state, which is the thinking state, and there's a state of presence in which you have risen above thinking.

Sometimes it happens to you accidentally. There are moments in your life when you feel suddenly, without any reason, a deep sense of peace and aliveness in the background. Nothing much has happened.

Or you are doing some kind of physical movement that requires your full attention so that there isn't much room for thinking anymore. You're climbing a mountain, for example. Any thought and you would slip off the wall, fall off the wall.

And as you climb up this mountain, suddenly you feel intense aliveness and presence. And it feels good. The goodness of being alive.

And then you come down the mountain, and the moment the danger passes, the mind starts again. And then the mind says, oh, you have to do that again. That was so good.

A shock can also do it. Or something suddenly appears in front of you and you don't quite know what it is. Something entirely new.

Say an animal as you're walking in the forest or something. Suddenly there's a moment of just presence. The mind hasn't come in and said, oh, this is called such and such.

And I saw it last year, and my aunt saw it the year before somewhere. There's just an alert present space in which the perception arises in that space of alert presence. So the thinking human, the personality, the thinking person with its history, its story, its problematic story.

I don't think there's any story that's not problematic. Any life story that is not problematic and just has a certain heaviness to it. Let me tell you about it.

So that recedes and is replaced by a space of awareness, aware presence. In that state of aware presence, the mind can still operate, but it is relatively unimportant. A thought may come, and you're much more likely, if a thought does come, that that may be an original thought that is empowered, not a repetitive old thought that you've thought about, that a thought that you've had thousands of times.

Because most thoughts in your head, and it's nothing personal in anybody's head, most thoughts that you think, you have thought many, many times. It's the old thoughts. It's easier to see it in others.

Your relatives. So in the absence of presence, there's only that repetitive mental noise. And part of that mental noise is the story of me.

It's the problematic story that is hoping at some point in the future, it will no longer be problematic. Not realizing that what it calls future has no actual existence, except as another thought. The only existence we call future has is as a thought in your head.

Beyond that, there's no such thing as future. If there were such a thing as future, somebody, some great explorer, would have found it. And we would have a monument.

He discovered the future. So far, it hasn't happened, and it's not likely to happen. Because it is a conceptual thing only.

When the future comes, which is a thought, it can only appear in the space of your aware presence, the light of consciousness can only appear as the now. Whatever form it takes in the space of now that you are, something appears. That's the now, the form of now.

So no such thing as future. Future is a thought. And this also applies to the past.

Because apart from the thoughts in your head, let's say this happened to me. I did this. He did this to me.

She did that to me. I did that to him and them and then they did that and then... It didn't happen in the past when it happened.

If it ever happened, because you know how the mind works, it gradually reinterprets the future. So what you see as things that actually happened, maybe they didn't. Or maybe they did, but when they happened, it was a now.

The only place where things can happen. And in order to have the idea that there is such a thing as future, you have to think about that now. So it's only you're in the light of now that the appearance of future arises.

But again, of course, there is no past. Even if time travel were a possibility, you could only arrive ever in the now. You could never say, oh now I'm in the past.

You see already the sentence doesn't make sense. Now I'm in the past. I've traveled to the Roman times and now I'm here in the past.

No, you're in the now. We cannot fully understand, nor do we need to through the analytical mind, how it is that it appears as if there were future and past. But we can see

without using, without making it into a philosophy, but much in a much more simple way by simply looking and seeing all there ever is, is now.

That is direct evidence. Time, which is past and future, can only appear as a thought. Time, you can, if you were a police inspector and you were looking for a criminal called Time, a very dangerous criminal, because he goes around murdering people all the time and killing off everything.

First deceiving them that Time is going to get them where they want to get to. And then after this criminal has deceived them, he or she kills them. Everybody's hoping to get to the future.

And of course, the very essence of future is in the end, it kills you. Time kills you. Everybody's hoping for more time to fulfill themselves.

And then Time gets you. So the police inspector looking for the criminal called Time can only find secondary evidence. Yeah, he's been here.

There's a dead body. Or he's been there, there's a rotten apple here. And then you can go on looking.

Or you can look at a photo of yourself 25 years ago, 30 years ago, and then look in the bathroom mirror. And then you see, again, you have secondary evidence of this, what this criminal has already done to you. And he's going to do more, even more damage.

And yet, Time itself, you cannot experience. People think they're experiencing Time. You don't experience Time.

You experience only ever the now. But sometimes people call that Time. I don't know why.

It's the now. So you don't experience past, you don't experience future, you cannot experience Time. The criminal can never be caught, because the criminal is a phantom.

And yet, bodies die. So who kills them, if there is no Time? Let's not go too far into all this.

We cannot deny that in this surface reality, there seems to be such a thing as Time. We use, we use Time really to fill in some void that we don't understand. Okay, it's Time.

That's Time does that. It seems to exist. It seems that you cannot get out of it.

It seems that it has you, it drags you along. And you deteriorate further and further. And finally you dissolve.

Okay, that seems to be the case, as far as the world of form is concerned. Forms are

short lived. And the very essence of the thinking mind is that it's usually thinking about past and future and its very thought processes are conditioned by the past.

What do you think is conditioned by your past? The question is, is there another dimension to you, to me, where this, what is ultimately an illusory thing, does not apply anymore? Is there a dimension in you where there is no Time?

Not as something to believe in, some comforting belief, but to actually, to be known firsthand. This brings me to the purpose of your life, which is the, they tell me, the title of this talk. I could, nice, I could get it in there.

The purpose of your life, if there is such a thing, is twofold. Primary purpose and secondary purpose. Primary purpose does not involve time, and that's a very strange thing.

Usually the moment you talk about purpose, you immediately think, okay, future. Usually you can't think of purpose without bringing up the idea of future, because it seems to imply that purpose is there and I'm here. Purpose is where you want to get to.

And whether or not you get there determines whether there's success or failure. So what I'm suggesting is, for you to realize that there is another kind of purpose, which is primary purpose. Secondary purpose involves time, and we will get to that a little later.

But primary purpose, we can't get to a little later, because primary purpose is to do with realizing what the purpose is for your life is without time. And the first thing I can, first little pointer we can use, is to say, okay, I can tell you what the purpose is. The primary purpose is to sit here in that chair.

And my primary purpose is here and talking. Your primary purpose is to sit there and listen. But the listening and the talking isn't that much different, because I can say I'm very, I'm listening to the words that come out of this mouth.

So it's the same thing, basically. Your primary purpose is to sit here, to be sitting here. The entire, the universe has conspired to put you here.

The totality of all the molecules and atoms that are floating around the universe, some of them temporarily gathering together and manifesting what looks like a person. They've come together, and the atoms and molecules in your body, at some point they were in stars. They were forged in the furnace of stars.

And in this weird way, it's all coming together, and the totality of life has suddenly put you here. Everything is connected to everything else. It's all timeless.

It's only when we look at it through our limited perspective, it appears that things, all these things happened in the past, and finally they brought you here. But ultimately, it's

all happening in the timeless present. And that whatever is at this moment is because it cannot be otherwise.

The totality has manifested the form of this moment. And so this is what has manifested. I'm sitting in this chair.

And my purpose is that. This is my primary purpose. Now, the mind says, that sentence doesn't actually make sense.

Because you're already here. So how can it be your purpose? Your purpose is to be here fully, to align yourself with this moment internally, and to realize that wherever you are, is where you're supposed to be.

And whatever you are doing in the now, is what you're supposed to do. It doesn't mean you can't do something else. In this moment, I'm doing this.

And I'm supposed to do it this moment. I'm drinking a glass of some water. This is my purpose right now.

Now my purpose is to put the glass back on the table. In what way is that different? If I know that this is my purpose, in what way is that different from the normal way of doing it?

Thinking about something else while I do it. The normal way of drinking a glass of water is, you want to get there already. While you pick up the glass, you already wanted to be here.

And while you're sipping the water, you want the water to be already in your stomach. And while it's traveling back towards the table, you already wanted to be there, even while it's still here. And this is only a tiny example of how people spend their whole life, not really wanting to be with what they're doing, because every doing is a means to an end.

And so they are not fulfilling their primary purpose at all. They are missing the whole thing. If every action you take, or almost every action, or 95%, 99%, whatever it is, even 90%, whatever you are doing is really a means to an end.

And where's the end? In the future. And where is the future?

It's a thought in your head. So that is the fate of humans, which is the fate of humanity right now, although some are beginning to step out of it. To live in such a way that is extremely frustrating and gives rise to continuous discontent, stress, anxiety, fear, and all kinds of things, because you're not fulfilling your primary purpose, which is to be aligned with the now, the only thing there ever is.

Internally aligned with the now, instead of reducing whatever you are doing in the now,

or wherever you are in the now, never being fully where you are, because your thoughts are taking you somewhere else, and never fully being in the doing of what you are doing. So the doing is a means to an end. This is the fate of humans who are trapped in the mind, who are trapped in thinking, because it's by being, it's because you're trapped in thinking that you live always for the next thing, because the next thing is a thought.

So your purpose is to live aligned with what is so that nothing that you do is a means to an end, but is an end in itself. That's the primary purpose. The secondary purpose is, yes, it's also a means to an end, but it's unimportant as such.

My primary purpose, I'll do it again. The glass is traveling, and it's fine. It's a beautiful moment.

The next moment is not going to be better than this one, when the water reaches my lips. It's fine. It's fine.

And it's beautiful to hold this glass, the shimmering water, see the aliveness of it. Of course, if you're in the thinking mind, you don't see it. It's a glass of water.

What are you talking about? If you're trapped in the thinking mind, you inhabit a conceptual universe that is dead, because everything you label, and you have concepts for everything, and that's a glass of water. There's nothing miraculous about this.

No, because you have never really looked. You've never really experienced it, neither when you're swimming, nor when you're in the shower, nor when you're drinking it. You've never actually, truly experienced water, because mind thinking was always interfering and creating a phantom conceptual universe that most people are completely trapped in.

So they don't experience the aliveness of the universe around them. One could say they are not present. They are not where they are.

And they are not total in what they do, because every doing is a means to some end. And the end is in the phantom dimension called future, which never arrives. I'm describing the human condition.

It's painful. Suffering, the Buddha called it. It's suffering.

It creates continuous suffering, either low level suffering, as is discontent, irritation, or more acute forms of suffering. So primary purpose is to be here fully and to be total in whatever you do, so that it does not become reduced, so that the preciousness of the present moment does not become reduced to a means to an end. And there, already you have your life purpose, primary.

That's the very foundation, foundation of your life. And many times, you forget your

primary purpose. But now, at least now you know it.

It's not, I haven't told you anything new, because when you listen to these words, you say, Oh, of course, I knew that. It's so obvious. It's so obvious.

You don't need convincing. You knew that. Of course, I knew that.

So why didn't I live it? Wrong question. The question is, am I living it now?

Okay. And that's the continuous practice of present being in the present moment. Many times, probably, you lose the now, you lose sight of your primary purpose.

And you fall back into some form of dysfunction, which the world calls normal behavior, normal existence. And you can watch films, TV, video, whatever, films, video, and they're all manifesting the same normal dysfunction. That's what it's all based on.

With occasionally, you get little glimpses here and there. That's always wonderful to see, glimpses of sanity coming into the insanity of normal existence. So primary purpose has nothing to do, for example, with how old you are.

Secondary purpose is to do with what you do as an so-called individual. And it's secondary. So we're not going into this right now.

It's, as I said, a little later. Primary purpose, you could be 95 years old, you could have only one more day to live, one more hour to live. Primary purpose would still apply.

Even if you have one minute to live, or a few seconds to live, you can be totally fulfill your primary purpose and enter presence. Presence is the arising of something new. Timeless is a better word.

It arises in you a timeless dimension of consciousness. And I cannot explain to you beyond a few little pointers, what presence is. I suggested, check if you're breathing or not, you'll be, there's a presence.

As I speak about it now, there are two dimensions to this moment here, the words and the presence. The presence is nothing to do with words or thinking. It is formless.

You cannot say, ah, there it is. You can never make the big presence into an object, a mind object, because presence is the eternal subject. Presence is the eternal I am.

Presence. In the New Testament, Jesus called it the kingdom of heaven. And he says, it says literally, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived.

And you can't say, ah, I've got it now. There it is. It is, I'm reluctant to use any word to describe it, but I'll use some.

The only pointers, it is the consciousness itself. Before the consciousness becomes a

form as a thought, an emotion, a sense perception, it is the stillness underneath all your thinking, which has always been there, will always be there, because it's timeless. Underneath all the thinking, there is a vast realm of consciousness that you touch when the mind subsides for a moment, there's a space between two thoughts in which you are conscious but not thinking.

And in that space, you're looking at a glass of water, and you see, without naming it, and you can sense its aliveness, because you can sense your own aliveness. And your own aliveness and the aliveness of this glass of water are one and the same aliveness. So the sense of separation disappears that you have when you're trapped in continuous mental labelling.

Here's the glass of water, and here is, I am here, my name, my history, and all that. And then you look at a flower, and you don't call it, you don't give it a name. You don't need to call it anything.

To truly see the flower, the mind needs to be still, and you're looking at it through stillness rather than mental noise. So the stillness, not the person that you thought you were, is looking at the flower, and ultimately, realizing that the flower is pervaded by the same stillness that pervades you. And so there's a recognition.

And whatever you perceive is pervaded by the same formless, no-thingness that the mind cannot understand, that no scientist has ever found. They haven't even started to look. And so it is a new way of being in the world, where you are no longer primarily a time-based entity called a person, sustained by continuous thought activity.

I mustn't stop thinking because I won't know who I am anymore. If I stop telling myself the story of me, and telling others so that I can get some feedback and confirmation that the story of me is real, if I stop telling the self-talk, if the self-talk that upholds my identity comes to an end, who am I? Carry on talking.

What do you think of this talk? Well, I think he's got a few points there, but on the other hand, I don't... I read another book last week.

It said the opposite of what he said, so I have to try to work that out. He says there's no time, but I absolutely disagree with that. Or even worse, it's all a load of rubbish, or garbage in America.

Everything is labeled the moment it arises. The little mind commenting on everybody you meet, and immediately it has something to say about the other person. And usually what it has to say has something to do with me and my story, and how this other person might fit into my story, or doesn't fit into my story, or could make my story more interesting, or is threatening my story.

Oh, I don't like him. And of course, there's no meeting. You never meet the other person.

You're meeting your own mind structures, your mind forms, and you think you're meeting somebody else. And in that state, many people get married. They never really met.

And then, of course, very soon it becomes unsatisfying, because you find out that the other person doesn't really fit into your story as well as you thought. And instead of enhancing your mind-made sense of self, it becomes a threat to your mind-made sense of self. Okay, it's time to get a divorce lawyer.

That was a big mistake. Now let's look for somebody else. A new way of living so that this little man or woman in the head doesn't run your life anymore.

There's nothing wrong with this little man or woman, except when he or she runs your life, because it'll make a mess of it. It has good intentions. I don't doubt that.

It has good intentions. But that's where the proverb, the phrase comes from. The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

This is when the ego, yes, I want to protect myself, and I need the best for myself, of course. Wonderful intentions, and always creates havoc, not only in people's personal lives, but collectively, the ego, the collective human ego, creates even worse havoc in the collective, which you can read about when you read a history book. I bought a history book the other day.

I saw it in a bookstore, and it looked interesting, and I read a few pages here and there. It's a thick book, Harvard professor of history, very well written, and he emphasizes a little bit more the human side of history, rather than the conceptual side of politicians getting together and all that nonsense. But the human suffering is so vast and unbelievable.

It's the 20th century history. It's called war of the world. The suffering is so unbelievable.

I mean, I already knew how insane history is. I talk about it a lot. But there I saw it again, and it's even more insane than I had realized.

Speechless. And this is what a dysfunctional state of consciousness produces. In one's personal life, it might look relatively harmless, but it produces dissatisfaction, continuous dissatisfaction and conflict, and never unease, never being really at ease for long.

You might be at ease with somebody, you fall in love with somebody, but it doesn't last, that sense of ease. If there's no shift in human consciousness, the madness will continue and another hundred years, I don't believe the planet could survive another hundred years if there's no change in the collective consciousness. But a change in the collective does not happen until the change happens in the individual.

The individuals make up the collective. This is why we are here. We are seeing, we are looking at the insanity and how it works.

And that is already the first step in liberation. Because who is it in you that can see the truth of this? Who or what is it in you that recognizes madness as madness, insanity as insanity, and might even laugh because it's so insane, either you cry or you laugh, or both.

Who is it, what is it in you that sees your own mind, its continuous chatter, its continuous self-talk, it's how negative it is a lot of the time, because negative thoughts are much more prevalent than positive thoughts. You can say, oh what a beautiful flower, but you won't think about that for very long, but a negative thought will survive for half an hour, an hour, two hours in your mind. The thought of beautiful flower, which again is not you haven't really seen the flower, it's a superficial thing, that thought remains perhaps for 10 seconds.

Oh that's a beautiful flower, and now let me think about what he did to me yesterday, and what he said, and what I'm going to do to him tomorrow. So what is arising is a dimension from where you are able to see what the mind is doing, awareness. The shift is from being a thought-based entity to an awareness-based, I don't even want to say entity, because it's you are much more vast when who you are, you realize that who you are has nothing to do with the thoughts that are going through your head.

It is vaster and deeper, it is you you touch it when you there's a moment of a gap between two thoughts, and you can never define that through thought. That's why sometimes in some meditation practices, or some spiritual teachings, you use the words, the question, who am I, as a little mantra or a little pointer. Who am I?

Now that of course is still a thought, those are still words. Who am I? Who am I?

This can actually work if you are alert, and do not attempt to answer the question. Whatever answer you find after you ask, who am I? That's not it.

Who am I? The answer is, in the space of alert, silent presence after the question. Who am I?

I don't know. That's it. That's it.

You can't grasp it. It's the essence of your identity, of what you feel. Everybody feels there's something very precious.

I am precious. And this sense of preciousness that people, you don't want to lose that. Even people whose life is relatively unpleasant, they still don't want to lose their sense of I.

But the sense of I gets usually mixed up with a story in the head. I am this, I am that. What we are doing here, we are attempting to take the sense of beingness, or I, or consciousness itself, out of its identifications with form, which primarily are thought forms.

So consciousness has been dreaming the dream of form. This is why, from the point of view of an awakened being, the normal human state is a dreamlike state. And if you discover that in yourself, if you get glimpses of, or many of you more than glimpses, of what it is to be present, and then you fall back into thinking, the qualitative difference is vast.

And you can then see how the two dimensions in yourself, and many of you, are going back and forth. Okay, you're present, and then something happens, and you go back into, and then something happens and you notice you're suffering. Oh, I forgot the primary purpose of my life, which is now.

Oh, thank God. I thought there were lots of problems, but there isn't actually a problem. That's an amazing realization.

There is no problem. And then the old machine in the head goes, what do you mean there's no problem? You better start thinking about your problems.

You're not going to solve your problems by just sitting there. An amazing realization is, in the present moment, there is only what is, but there are no problems. And if your attention remains in the now, you no longer inhabit a world of problems.

Challenges you may still face, but they come to you in the space of now. Not a problem, because you have to take some action. If a challenge comes, there's a situation, okay, well, you look, and this is essential here, instead of thinking, okay, I was immediately reacting when something arises, a challenge, a problem, so-called problem, you look at the situation.

The situation may come in the form of a person, a difficult person, the world is full of them, a difficult person or situation, suddenly something doesn't click, shouldn't be happening, says the mind, but it is. So you're looking at the is, and you're applying this state of consciousness to the situation in which you are simply directing attention at this situation or person. So the person may be coming at you and saying, you did that, you, I'll always never forget what you did 10 years ago.

And then three years ago, you said that, and I've been thinking about it ever since. And you look, now by look, I mean, it's more than the eye or the visual thing, or maybe part of it, but the real, what it really means is, there is attention, a space of attention. You give that situation or that person the space of consciousness.

And there's a sharpness to that, which is non-aggressive. And yet, there's a certain

intensity, perhaps that's a better word. There's an intensity of consciousness with which you meet that situation.

And you look. And so there's a spacious, spacious looking. There's just an alert presence.

And then you'll find whatever you need to do, you do it. It comes as a harmonious, organic movement, not a reactive force. The reactive force would say, when the difficult person comes and says, what you did to me, what do you mean I did to you?

Do you remember what you did? Or we'll shout something back or whatever. That's the normal way.

So here comes the non-reactive. Now, if that person starts, wants to hit you, of course, you will take action. You don't necessarily remain there, although you might.

You don't, you can't, nobody can predict what comes out of presence. There are no rules. It doesn't say, when an unpleasant person comes towards you, then you have to get out of the way or you have to not move and let him hit you.

No, there is no rule. What spontaneous action arises out of presence and an intelligence is then at work in this situation, whatever the situation is, that is far greater than the intelligence of the thinking mind. So you meet challenging situations and people through that space of presence.

That is the same space that is when you look at the flower. Now, a flower is not challenging. It's a little easier to be present with that.

It all virtually invites presence. The flower says, please, here I am. Look at me.

Because it's only through your conscious perception that the flower, which ultimately is not separate from who you are or what you are, there is a oneness. The flower recognizes itself through your perception. The flower is so innocent, it doesn't even know of its own beauty.

But the one consciousness out of which this flower came, the one consciousness out of which this body came, in that one consciousness, the flower suddenly recognizes its own beauty. Ah. That happens when you go through nature and you're present and not imposing mental labels on what you perceive.

And you realize it's all sacred. The flower is sacred. The tree is sacred.

The blade of grass is sacred. But you don't tell yourself that it's sacred. Well, occasional thoughts may arise, but you sense the sacredness of that, of the forest, of the desert, of the sky.

A long, long time ago, humans in very ancient civilizations, humans still knew of the

sacredness of the universe that surrounds them. Then more and more thinking happened, which is conceptualization, when everything becomes more and more dead, because it's conceptualized. Everything around you becomes more and more dead, and the aliveness and sacredness of the universe, including your own aliveness and sacredness, is lost.

It's not lost, covered up. You don't see it anymore. And that's where we have arrived, collectively, as a species, where we inhabit a lifeless world, because everything is, there's a veil, the density of mind between you and the universe.

And that is dissolving now in you. And that is the liberation, the liberation, the arising of that new consciousness, the fourth state of consciousness. And it is, it's not necessarily a spectacular event with drums and trumpets.

It's a very still thing. Shh. There's vast power in that stillness, vast power, the power of life itself, the very intelligence of life is in that power, the unconditioned intelligence.

And the more you embrace that within yourself, the space rather than the form, because that's what it is, the inner stillness, this one between two thoughts, that is for the formless dimension of consciousness itself. So that is, you live from there rather than from and through the form. You still honor the form, which means you, of course, occasionally you have to think, that's fine.

And thinking can become empowered and actually a wonderful tool when it is no longer the repetitive and largely negative, conditioned mental noise, useless, heavyness, a burden. The more you get in touch with the space, the stillness, the alert stillness, the more the usual thought processes and the conditioned thinking becomes gradually eroded. It's like karma, karma being all the unconscious conditioning that you inherit and you mistake it for who you are, and it forces you to relive it again and again and rethink it again and again.

And then that comes to an end as the new arises, and then the mind can fulfill its rightful purpose in the practical world. And then it can even be the servant of the creativity that comes only from the unconditioned. And then the mind can come in and give it form, one form or another, it's fine, it's beautiful.

You can manifest then also through the mind, you can manifest things. People recently have been talking a lot about this, manifesting things in your outer life, rather than not through struggle and stress and negativity, that after 10 years of struggle, stress and negativity, finally you become a millionaire, and you have finally, you've made it, it's pointless. You've been unhappy for 10 years, you continue to be unhappy even with your millions, and in the process of making your millions, you've made many other people unhappy.

And that's called success. Now they know who I am, and I know who I am. Not in that way, and not in a way that comes out of the continuous neediness of the ego that says, I don't feel fulfilled, and there's something missing here.

I haven't arrived at the fullness of myself. I think I need to have a bigger house, because through the bigger house, I can fulfill myself. I can finally identify with that.

The ego doesn't spell it out like that, but it feels, and then you get the bigger house through more struggle and stress, and skillful maneuvering, and eliminating the competition. And then you get the bigger house, and for a while, it feels, yes, now I'm beginning to know who I am. But after a few weeks or months of sitting in the big house, you begin, hmm, something missing.

It's not fulfilling me anymore. But I need, okay, I'm going to look for the trophy wife. You get the dating service, whatever, and the rest we don't need to go into that.

The continuous reaching, searching for, I want, now I want this, and I want that, and I want that. It's not that. And yet, you live in this surface reality.

This is the world of form. You can enjoy the world of form for what it is, without expecting something from it that it cannot give you. So you can enjoy things and manifest things, no longer out of the neediness of the ego that says, I need this to make me happy, because the world of form can't do that.

I need this so that I can get a sense of fulfillment and success of having arrived. But really, what people want is to be fully themselves. They don't know that.

They want that sense of aliveness, of being myself fully. But they want it through this, that, or the other. They don't realize nothing can give it to you because you already have it.

And the only way of knowing that you already have it, and not only do you have it, you are it. You are what you're looking for already. And you don't know that because you're always looking somewhere else.

You can only know that in the now, by aligning yourself with the now and the power that is there within you. The empty space, the formless, the consciousness, the stillness, whatever you want to call it. There's the power, and there I am.

The I am that is stripped of all this and that. The pure experiencing or knowing yourself as the being, as being, as life itself. I am life itself.

I don't have a life. People think they have a life. Well, some people say, I don't have a life, but they mean something else.

I don't have a life. Or they say, get a life. Okay, I'll try.

So there are two ways of saying I don't have a life. One is the deluded way. You say, I don't have a life.

And you mean my life story is not satisfying? And no matter what I do, I don't seem to find satisfaction. That is, I don't have a life.

Or there's another way of, another meaning to I don't have a life. And you say, I don't have a life when you realize that you and life are not two, but one. There is no you and life.

And you cannot lose your life. How is that possible? Because that would imply that there's life and there's me.

And I lose it. And what's left then? Me.

So you say, I don't have a life. What it really means is I realize that I and life are not two. I am life.

I am one with life. I am a temporary manifestation of the one life in this form. As the flower is a temporary manifestation of the one life, the one consciousness, the one spirit.

I don't use that very often. It has too much history, that word. The one life temporarily appearing in this form.

And the one I, it's the same thing. The one life. The one out of which the many come into which the many return.

The one I that's sitting here and here, appearing in what looks like different forms. The one knowing yourself as that and realizing, of course, I don't have a life because I am life. I am the universe experiencing itself temporarily as this form and as this life story.

It's a flicker in the life of the universe. Every individual life is like a tiny flicker of there goes your whole life story. From the perspective of the universe, all those things that I'm so worried about and you know all the important things.

A flash and billions and other flashes. The universe is experiencing itself in form. It wants that.

It wants to experience self in billions of life forms. But it's all one totality of experience. And you are one cell in that totality.

But it wants something else too. The universe not only wants to experience the outward movement, it also wants to know itself who or what it is beyond the form. There's the outward movement.

Consciousness becomes this, that and that and that and my billions of forms. But

consciousness also wants to know itself. It wants to lose itself in billions of forms in order to suffer and then know itself, its essential nature as timeless, formless, unlimited, eternal peace.

And so, this is why we are here. Primarily, our gathering is not about the outward movement into form, because this has been going on for millions and millions of years already. And the universe loved it.

The dream of form. It dreamt the dream of form. The consciousness, the universe, dreaming the dream of form, and then suddenly in the dream of form, the form sits there and hears the words, this is the dream of form.

And you are not the form. You just thought you were. You thought you had identified with every thought, identified with the short-lived body, identified with the story of me, all very short-lived interests.

Who am I? Not this, not that. Who I am cannot be defined through form or through a word, but you can know it directly.

You can know yourself as the timeless, eternal subject of all experience, untouched by any happening or event. The eternal I am-ness that underlies all the manifestations. And then you can look at the manifestations and recognize yourself, the one, in every manifestation.

You can recognize the essence of who you are in the flower. And you love it, because you love yourself. Because you recognize yourself, and recognizing yourself is love, because there's only the I.

And then another human being. You recognize the essence of the other, not the story, not whatever your mind is saying of who the other is, none of that. You recognize the beingness, not through words, but through stillness.

And at that moment, you recognize yourself in the other, and the sense of separation goes away, that you're created by excessive thinking. And there's love. So love is recognition of the one, recognizing yourself.

And that is the transformation also of the dream. For a while then, the dream becomes very pleasant, because within the dream of form, in which you continue to move as this body for a little while, within the dream of form, something else arises and shines through, and that is the recognition of that which underlies all form. I am.

Then the world of form loses its density and heaviness. And you experience the world, or your life, your so-called life, which isn't yours, you experience it very differently. It has a lightness to it.

Light in both senses of this English word, light, which is the lack of heaviness, but also the light of consciousness shining through the world of form, which you recognize. So the transformation of the world happens as your state of consciousness undergoes the transformation, and the recognition happens. And this is reflected in the universe around you, because they are really one.

The universe that you inhabit reflects your predominant state of consciousness. And when you awaken to who you are beyond form, then the universe in which you still move as this form, the dream, reflects that recognition, which means it is no longer a threatening place. As long as you don't know yourself and you're totally identified with this form, psychological and physical, all other forms are basically threatening.

And that's been the history of humanity, continuous fighting against other forms, because every other form is a threat, either personal threat or collective threat. When we get together, that's us and that's them. And then you get the concept of the alien other.

Another human being is then so alien, you conceptualize them through the head and make them so other that any kind of violence can be inflicted on them, and you don't feel it, and you don't sense it, because you've totally deadened yourself to the aliveness of the other through mental conceptualization, as you have deadened yourself to your own aliveness through mental conceptualization. And that goes, and then you experience the transformation of the world. There's more harmony.

You no longer expect from the world what it cannot give you, which is yourself, which is peace, which is the recognition of the essence. Happiness, I don't like that, even like that word, it sounds a little too superficial. It's deeper than that.

You don't demand that the forms of this world, people or situations should make you happy and fear that they might make you unhappy. So fear and expectation go away, that's good. And then you can experience the world of form and enjoy it, including other human beings, interaction with other human beings, because you're always meeting yourself.

Isn't that wonderful? And you always look different in some other form. I appear in so many forms, it's so beautiful.

I like to sit in cafes, sometimes I sit and drink a cup of coffee and just watch all the people that come in and get their latte or whatever it is, or they sit there and just watch, looking at myself appearing in so many forms, and there's no thought. What is there to think about? Anything the mind can say about one of these beings is ultimately an illusion.

It's just judging the form, that's not the being. So being there as the space of

consciousness at Starbucks, there's a space of consciousness, and there I'm looking at myself, drinking coffees, whatever they drink. It's beautiful.

And every being is beautiful, no matter what they look like on the outside. When you're in touch with the beauty of being, the aliveness of being within yourself, then you can always look through the form and sense the beauty and the aliveness in the so-called other, which is no other. And then your life improves immeasurably because you don't create an insane world of conflict with others anymore, because there are no others.

And then others love you because they recognize that something is there. They recognize themselves through you, but their mind may misinterpret it and say, oh, you are very special. The mind might even get attached to you and say, I want to marry you.

But that's the mind. But yes, people, of course, feel drawn to when they feel recognized in their essence. It's the most beautiful thing you can give to another, which is no other.

When humans, they feel essentially when they meet you, that you are recognizing them in their essence, and they're not being judged. And they can sense that unless the density is so much in their mind that they can't sense anything anymore, which is possible too, and that's fine. So they are not being judged, so you feel.

Most humans feel the only time they can relate to other beings and are not being judged is with little children before they start to speak, which means think. And that's why many people love looking at little babies, because the baby looks back at you and there's no judgment. The baby, of course, hasn't arrived at the thinking stage yet.

We are not going back to the baby stage. We are stepping beyond the thinking stage. But the baby is already, is still in that state of non-judgment, and the baby will look at you, and when you look at a baby, suddenly you feel good inside.

Everybody here probably has experienced that. You feel, look at a baby, the baby looks, there's a light shining through the eyes, and you look into the eyes of the baby, and the baby caves, and you know the baby is not judging you. And the same with a dog.

You go, the dog comes up wagging its tail, it's so beautiful, he has no opinions. And immediately you love him for it, for not judging you. And in a sense, recognizing you, because the dog has so much love, you just need to look at the dog, the tail starts wagging, oh joy, the joy of life, just incredible.

And the humans, they probably had it 10, 20,000 years ago, before the thinking stage started, the joy every moment of being alive, the playfulness. That's why it's so liberating to be with animals. Ah.

But of course, no, we are not going back to this stage of a dog, that that is beautiful for the dog. That's not for us. We are stepping beyond, or rising above, thinking.

That's what presence is. And then, yes, there are some similarities between that state of having gone beyond thought, and the stage of not having arrived at thought yet. There are certain similarities.

Any being that has not arrived at thought yet is also more connected with the whole, and supported by the whole, than the thinking human. As expressed in mythology, through the figure of the fool. In many ancient mythology, there's this figure of the fool, who is a simpleton, and yet the fool is entrusted with tasks by the intelligence of the universe, that more so-called intelligent or developed humans could not do.

You have it in the Lord of the Rings, for example, as a more recent mythological tale, where the hobbit, a very simple person, all the others around the hobbit are more intelligent, but only he can do that, perform that task. The universe uses the fool to perform this all-important task, because the fool is aligned with the totality. And of course, the same thing in Forrest Gump, the film.

Again, you have the so-called the simpleton, which, and always the universe supports him. And there's no ego, there's never claiming it, I did that, I achieved that. The fool hasn't arrived at the ego stage yet.

Normal humans, they are full of ego, full of mind, full of me, and so they are blocked. The universal consciousness finds it hard to use them. And then you go, where we are going, beyond thought, where again you have the connectedness, and the universe supports you.

It becomes, you experience life as not antagonistic anymore, but as helpful. Things happen, and then you don't need to do that much anymore, that's the amazing thing. It just, things happen, the movement, and you go with the movement.

I was ready to retire last year, I thought, okay, I'm not going to do that much teaching anymore. And then the universe came, and the phone rang, and said, it's Oprah. I said, okay, it's not time to retire yet.

And this, one can only look upon the, what's happening in amazement, what's going on? Wow. Am I doing it?

No, of course I'm not doing it. Just an opening for it, as you are, an opening for consciousness to move through. That's what life wants of you, of course you're not separate, but when we use language, we always separate.

Life wants consciousness to manifest into this world, the light. In the New Testament, Jesus says, you are the light of the world. You are the light of the world.

You are the consciousness that illuminates the world. And that's, know yourself as that, and that's freedom, that's liberation, that's awakening, that's the end of suffering and

madness. And it's happening right here, right now, through this form.

Well, that's something to be grateful for. Thank you.

[Speaker 16] (1:30:58 - 1:34:03)

Hello, and welcome everyone. My name is Tammy Simon, and I'm the founder of Sounds True, a multimedia publishing company. Thank you.

And Sounds True is so honored to be sponsoring this evening here tonight with Eckhart Tolle at Royce Hall at UCLA. Eckhart Tolle is a world teacher. As a world teacher, his message goes across every boundary, division, any obstacle.

His books, including *A Power of Now* and *A New Earth*, have been translated into 32 languages, and he's just returned from a nine-city tour in Europe. And part of the reason for his appeal worldwide is that his message is one that connects us to our innate, natural human spirituality. And although Eckhart uses language, it's in such a way that he's pointing to what is beyond language.

And that's what we'll be experiencing here tonight together, this state that he calls presence, an alert, relaxed, open, spacious way of being. And tonight is really not so much about accumulating more language or more ideas or more concepts. It's about this experience and this experience that we're all about to have together.

In just a couple of minutes, Eckhart will be joining us on stage. And before he does, I just want to make two final comments here. One is to ask everyone to please turn off your pagers, cell phones, noise-making devices of any kind.

It seems to interfere with the state of presence. And then secondly, instead of the normal conventional applause, the way that I would ask you to help us welcome Eckhart on stage is to sit for a few minutes and to allow the thunderous inner applause of being, our own natural stillness and silence connecting here together, to sit in that silent thunderous inner applause for a period of time. And when Eckhart's ready, he'll join us on stage.

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:34:52 - 1:46:26)

Welcome. You're here now. No matter how you got here, somehow you're in that seat now.

And I suggest to start with, you feel yourself being here now in that seat, including whatever mental or emotional movements are inside you now. Tammy mentioned turning off cell phones and other noise-making devices. She forgot to mention one, but where's the switch off button?

Now, if you try to switch off your mind, can be very frustrating. As if you didn't have enough problems already in your mind. And now you add an additional problem, which is, I can't figure out how to switch off my mind.

So you have more mind and perhaps more discontent or upset because you've heard or have perhaps occasionally experienced inner stillness. You know that such a thing is possible or believe it's possible, but can't seem to do it. So let's not even try because we don't want to add more problems.

Okay. So please just stay with what is. Without demanding, this should be different.

This moment should be different. Now you've already had a little taste of that because getting here, it seems to be, especially in LA, getting to the place always seems to involve certain challenges. It's a dynamic place, maybe that's why.

A few years ago, a hundred people came through the back door and occupied seats without tickets. And then the hundred people who had tickets came in and didn't find their seats. So let's consider that our session, our spiritual session started the moment you may your way to this hall.

So let's say that's where it all started. And that's good because now you still may have some of the energy that was generated by the conditions that you encountered on your way here. And this is good because it means we have something to work with.

So you're not, you don't come here as Buddhas, although the Buddha is there underneath, just waiting to come up. You come here as a mental, emotional entity. And that's your experience.

And that's something you can work with, not try to get rid of. Work with means to bring it into the light of awareness. To look at it, to see it's there, upset, impatient, restless, complaining, why don't they, why do they, how?

They should, shouldn't. This is too much. I can't stand it anymore.

Thoughts arising. Many of them empowered or amplified by an emotion that corresponds to the thought. A thought alone is relatively light, but when it gets amplified by an emotion, it goes.

And then it's not that you have a thought, the thought has you. So it takes you over. Some of you may have seen the film came out earlier this year, the number 23, where the protagonist becomes completely obsessed by the number 23 and sees it everywhere.

But of course, it's not the number 23 that he's obsessed with. It's the thought 23. So it shows you what can happen in an extreme form when a thought takes you over

completely.

And in this case, of course, it runs this person's life and it's amplified by fear. So there is no, there's this, all that's left there is that enormous thought empowered by a very strong emotion. It occupies this person's entire inner space, so to speak.

And this is an extreme form. Another film that shows the same thing came out a few years ago, A Beautiful Mind, where a person is actually based on a true story. A highly intelligent person becomes totally obsessed with certain fantasies.

Again, thoughts, and these thoughts take him over so completely that he actually sees them as if they were external things and people which are not actually there. So interesting to see what this being taken over by a thought, what this is like in an extreme form, because to a greater or lesser degree, we all suffer from that condition. And sometimes, sometimes the thought is relatively harmless.

It's you, and you can justifiably say, I'm having a thought. The thought occurs to me, but at other times, you are not having a thought, and you're not, when you are not having a thought, but the thought has you, how do you know that this is happening? You don't even know that you're having a thought.

You are so identified with the thought that whatever judgment this thought pronounces upon the world, you believe to be absolute reality. And the world is full of people like that. It is the human condition in its present dysfunctional state, nothing personal in it.

And you see it in very extreme forms, not only in when you actually see, yes, this person is mentally ill. You see it also in certain places in the world where people are so obsessed with collective thought forms, be they political or religious, that it creates havoc where they live. Year after year, the same thing is playing itself out.

Totally obsessed with certain ways of looking at the world. There is no other way of looking at the world, but this way. They don't even know that this is their way of looking at the world.

That is their reality. They are possessed by thought. And so to a greater or lesser degree, it is everybody's fate so far.

It's been like that on this planet that you're being possessed by thought plus the emotion that goes with thought. There's a self in every thought that arises. And there's an absolute conviction in this identification that this thought is absolutely the reality.

So here as an initial exercise, I suggest that you just have a little look inside and see whether perhaps you, whether perhaps a thought is having you. Or a thought plus an emotion is occupying your entire space. There's almost nothing left.

Okay, now I'm inviting you to look and see what kind of thought it is. Okay, it says that. It pronounces this or that kind of judgment.

And you feel what is the emotion that goes with the thought which pronounces this or that kind of judgment. Okay, then you feel that. So you bring a vigilance into your inner state, an alertness.

Okay, that's there. You don't demand that you shouldn't be having this thought. It's there.

How can you demand you shouldn't be having it if you're having it? There it is. But suddenly you recognize that this is a thought.

And you also recognize the feeling that goes with the thought. How does that feel? You have to see what it feels like.

Is it a contraction? Is it a turmoil? Is it still?

[Speaker 18] (1:46:29 - 1:46:30)

Oh, okay.

[Speaker 1] (1:46:31 - 3:20:33)

So the moment you direct your attention, then you realize that you are having this thought. The thought no longer has you because suddenly your attention brings another dimension into this whole unconscious game. Your attention brings up a dimension that before you might not even have known existed.

So just this see what is my inner state now. You simply observe thoughts. What are they saying?

This thought is that. Another thought that says that. And whether justified or not no longer matters.

It's a thought that arises. An emotion goes with it. And suddenly you have a little bit of space inside around that thought or that emotion.

There's a little bit of space which comes with attention. Attention is space. And so you have a little bit of spaciousness around.

Even if it was a very heavy thought, you have a little bit of space around it. And in that space, there is a simple sense of presence or beingness. There is no turmoil in the space.

So there is a dimension from where you can know that there is, if it's turmoil or whatever it may be, or just a slight upset, very normal conditions. Almost everybody who lives, especially in a big city like this, every day you experience conditions, inner conditions

that arise continuously. And usually you identify it.

Some people experience conditions that are relatively benign or even quite positive. They are good at handling the world out there. They make money.

They are successful. They have a positive outlook and deal with things as they arise. So they have a good kind of conditioning.

Their parents already were out to succeed and they taught their children to succeed. And here we go. Go for it.

Yeah. Go. And that seems okay.

That mental conditioning seems to be quite good. But everybody, even in this so-called positive form of conditioning, after a while, it wears you down and it's not enough. And even that after a while leads to a sense of, this isn't it.

This is not enough. And even that will take you sooner or later into some form of unhappiness. And often the unhappiness is already there underneath the conditioning.

Just comes up at night at three in the morning when you wake up. And then you have other people who suffer from very destructive or negative forms of conditioning. They were brought up to believe that everybody's out to get you.

So at an early age, they buy a gun to defend themselves and so on. So that's many forms of mental conditionings are there in people, but they are all thought forms. And for many humans still on this planet, that's all there is to their lives.

They are thought forms that are invested with a sense of self. So identified with the mental emotional conditioning. And that to a large extent determines how you experience the world.

Because you look at things through your conditioned mind, a filter. And we are not here to improve the conditioned mind. There is a place for that.

There are many workshops you can go to or books you can read, how to improve. And for many people, it's a step on their development, their spiritual development. First they realize, yes, there's something I can do about it.

But this is not what we're doing here. We are here to access, or in many of you have already accessed it. So it's a question of deepening a dimension that has nothing to do with your past.

A dimension of consciousness that is timeless. Nothing to do with your personal history. The only good thing about the personal history here, the helpful, the one helpful thing about your personal history is that it got you here.

Now, I don't necessarily mean here, this place or listening to this speaker. It got you to a point of awakening. If you were not awakening, you would not even be here.

And the few of you who came here accidentally believing this talk was going to be about something else, they will either be surprised and suddenly something within them will respond and say, wow, I thought I was something else altogether. Or they will become very frustrated within a few minutes, or if you're not frustrated already, and say, what is he actually saying? And this is the reason why if you are a graduate or undergraduate student at UCLA, they will not give you credits for attending this gathering.

They don't even realize what this gathering is all about, because if they did, they probably wouldn't have allowed it to take place here. So it's a question really, not of the speaker trying to convince anybody of anything, but a recognition in you that what these words are saying is true, and you recognize it in yourself through your own consciousness. Because deep down, and by deep down, I mean underneath the condition mind, it might not even be that deep, just underneath it, there is a vast intelligence that surpasses anything you've ever learned.

And even if you have three PhDs, far beyond anything you have ever learned, it's relatively insignificant, no matter how highly educated you are. There is a vast pool of intelligence that is unconditioned, that is the space underneath the mind out of which any creative idea that has ever come to anybody has arisen. Anything that was new, that was something powerful, that came into this world, often within the madness of normal human existence and human history, occasionally flashes of great creativity or incredible insights came here and there.

Most of human history is madness, but here and there you get flashes. Flashes. So if humanity were a single human being and you looked at the history of this single, this human being, you would say this human being is suffering from a dangerous mental disorder or psychosis.

A very violent person really should be locked away. But occasionally he or she has lucid moments. That's humanity up to this point.

Now we have arrived at a point where lucid moments are not enough anymore. They will not help us to survive this madness into the next century, into this new century. Lucid moments are not enough.

What is needed and what is happening, otherwise all these people would not come to listen to a speaker who is not charismatic. If so many people come to listen to a speaker who is not charismatic, there must be some truth there somewhere. And of course the truth is not in the speaker.

The truth is in you. And that is the truth of who you are beyond the mind-made sense of

self. The noise machine in the head and the emotions that go with it.

The ego entity. By ego, I mean complete identification with a conditioned mind. True.

No space. That's what ego means. No, you don't realize, you don't recognize the most important, let's put it like that for a moment, the most important part of you, the most important dimension to who you are is totally unrecognized.

And this is still the fate of the majority of humanity although far more people than ever before are now actually awakening. They are going through the process of awakening out of that state of unconsciousness. Now, when you talk to a normal world and talk about unconsciousness, they think you're talking about having fainted or going, but unconscious means in our language that there is complete identification with a stream of thinking.

All you are then is a conditioned entity playing out your conditioning, which may be quite good or maybe not very good or in between. For most people, it's in between. Happy one day, unhappy the next.

And unhappy more often than happy. Discontent, sense of something is missing here, lack, not enough. I haven't fully arrived at myself yet.

So nothing seems to be actually fulfilling for very long. The continuous need to look for something to add to who I am. Okay, there's another experience.

Ah, or I can buy something new. Go out and look there. Ah, yeah, how much is that?

Okay, take it. Take it home. And then it's a nice, shiny bag.

And you've read all the ads about it already, which tell you if you want to be a true individual, you buy this product. And then you have this nice, shiny bag. And then you get home and you take it out.

Now I know who I am. And for a little while, it works, maybe an hour or even a couple of days. But then you wait a couple of days and then of course, okay, what's next?

The discontent is there again. Something missing. Something missing.

Always looking for that which is missing. And where is the ego looking for that which is missing? Always, because it's obviously not here.

It's not even looking here. It already knows that what is missing isn't here. So the ego isn't even looking here.

It's looking in the next moment for what's missing. So that's why everybody lives, not consciously, but unconsciously, as if the next moment or the one after that were more

important than this moment. It's a normal way to live.

People don't realize that this is how they live. Very rarely are they actually at home or one with this moment. Very rarely.

And some people are only at home or one with this moment when they are getting tired and the noise machine in the head is too tired to produce more thoughts. Oh, so you're halfway towards sleep and for the first time that day, it feels good to be alive. Oh.

And then you're longing for the complete annihilation of self in deep sleep. Get away from that, from the self. Get away from the noise machine with its continuous stuff-producing machine.

Stuff. You need this. You want this.

Stuff. And then you go. And then you sleep.

If you're lucky, all night long. But you probably, the noise machine wakes up at three in the morning and starts working. Oh my God.

And you remember that you have problems and the great heaviness descends upon you, especially if you're in bed. There is no problem, but the mind doesn't know that. And there you are.

And then the body responds with an emotion that the body doesn't realize that all your thoughts are just thoughts to the body. The body responds to thought as if thought were a reality. So when you're thinking about your problems and how very, very challenging your problems are, then your body reacts as if this were, you were actually in a crisis situation at three in the morning in bed.

So that's where people, the noise machine in the head, then for many humans, the only way they can be free of it is when they move towards unconsciousness. And of course, another way of moving towards unconsciousness is alcohol, which helps also to some extent, not always, but it helps some people to feel a little better for a while. Suddenly, all the day they were stressed and obsessed.

And then finally they get to their, wherever they keep their drinks or to go to the bar and pour themselves. It calms down the noise machine in the head for a while. But there's a price.

The price is you're moving towards unconsciousness. But on your way towards unconsciousness, you feel a little better. Yeah.

So drugs, whatever it may be, smoke, have a smoke. So this is not the way we want to go. So there's no smoking here, no alcohol.

And if one or two of you have had a couple of drinks before coming here, don't feel guilty. It's fine. That's what is.

You're still awake, I assume. So there is another way of becoming free of the conditioned mind that you inherited, that you came already into this world with. The ego, of course, looks for liberation from its unsatisfying, unsatisfactory state.

It looks, the ego knows this is what, it knows something is missing, but it always looks in the wrong place. As we already said, it looks there, but never here. So it never goes deep into life, into what is.

It ignores the simple reality of the present moment and looks towards the next moment for satisfaction, for that which I can add that will make me complete. Hence, it's obsession with future, with the next moment. And hence, everybody lives that way, almost everybody.

As if the next moment were more important than this moment. And this isn't that strange. It's a form of mental illness because the next moment doesn't even exist, except as a thought in your head.

That's the only absolute reality that future has is it exists as a thought in your head. And it is fine as for practical purposes, it's a helpful thought that there is such a thing as future because it enables you to make an appointment. So it's helpful we got here because of future, because of this thought that there is such a thing as future.

But there isn't because nobody has ever seen it or touched it or experienced it. And since nobody has ever seen, touched or experienced it, we can assume that it doesn't exist. And obviously it doesn't because when the future comes, it's the now.

The next moment comes that you wanted to get to. And finally you get there and it turns out it's the now again. And many people experience that even people who make it, this city is big on making it.

So even some of the audience have made it and just they're here miraculously because obviously there must be something missing. And others are still perhaps hoping to make it and perhaps believing that coming here will help them. It might in some strange way, but let's not go into that now.

There's something missing and whatever you achieve, you will find yourself in the now. That's the weird thing. When finally you move into that big house, right?

Wherever it is, up on the mountain with the greatest view in the world. And then you sit there in a big armchair and you look around and there's a satisfaction. I made it, I made it.

And then it turns out after a few days, oh, it's still the now. I thought there was more to it when I projected myself into the next moment or the one after that, when I projected myself into that situation that was so great in my mental projection. And now that it's here, it's just this.

And even the big house after a while, the novelty wears off. You invite a few, you have some dinner parties so that everybody admires the house and that's good. Get recognition.

And then it was, oh, what now? I don't even need to work anymore. You can just sit all day.

Okay, I've made it. Not enough because it's only the now. And the ego doesn't like it.

And so it carries on looking. More experiences, relationships, sex, drugs, dangerous going to this, experience that, experience that, travel there, travel there. And wherever you go, you find yourself, you sit in the hotel room or on the beach in Fiji.

It's the now. And the ego runs away from it, not realizing that what it has been looking for is hiding here. No matter what form this now takes, it is hiding where the conditioned mind, which is the ego, has never really looked.

It always made the now at best into a means to an end. Okay, this now, I need this now because it enables me to get to that more important moment, which is the future. Okay, a stepping stone, best of times.

Or the ego had to reduce the now to an obstacle. And for some people, that is their normal existence. Every day long, every day long, whatever comes into the now, they look at it as an obstacle.

Get out of the way. I want to get there. Every person that comes in, I want something else.

The ego always wants not this. It wants to use this to get there. It wants to use every person that comes into now to get there.

So every person the ego meets, okay, are you going to enable me to get to the next more important moment? How can I use you to get where I want to get to? So the now is made into an obstacle.

Or for people who are very strongly, very strongly identified with the egoic mind, they make the now into an enemy. Continuously complaining it's never enough. They shouldn't, why don't they?

This is never... They can go into the most wonderful place and after five minutes, they found the one thing that's not working as it should. And they're complaining, they should

do something about it.

If not, I'm going to do something about it. And if they're not complaining verbally, they're complaining in their heads. They're complaining about situations, about other people, about what's happening or complaining that something that should be happening is not happening.

This sounds insane because it is insane. But it is not, nothing personal. It is not recognized as insanity because it is fairly normal.

And if it's normal, then it's not recognized as an illness. So that is the dysfunctional state of consciousness that is condemned to perpetual discontent, perpetual unhappiness, perpetual upsets. Conditions are so upsetting always.

Life is so upsetting. People are upsetting. Without people, maybe it would be okay, but hell is other people, said Jean-Paul Sartre, the philosopher.

Hell, the literal translation of what he said is actually hell is the others, the others. And the ego is big on emphasizing the otherness of other people. It loves other.

So it continuously is critical and suspicious and judgmental because they are, here's me and there are the others, me. And the more I can emphasize the otherness of others, the more strengthened I feel in my fictitious sense of self. So some people have this hard ego shell and everybody they come into contact with is basically an abstract entity.

They have D, they have made through mental abstraction, made other human beings into just thought forms by pronouncing judgments and believing in their judgments. But they've already done it to themselves because they live through a conceptual identity. This is who I am, thought forms, memories, that's me.

No, it's not, it's just thoughts. So the end point of entry into the awakened state of consciousness is the present moment where the egoic self has never even looked, doesn't want to know. So anybody who is ready can open themselves to this and see, okay, let's find out what's so great about this moment.

Okay, then you look and then the ego says, well, this moment, there's so many moments every day, so many moments happen, so where am I going to look, which moment? And of course, that is a delusion again. There are not many moments and you can verify that in your own experience by asking yourself, is it still the now?

Yes, at any time I suggest as a spiritual practice, tomorrow, so-called tomorrow, it's a thought form. When it comes, it's the now. So, or even tonight, when you walk out of here, when you walk out of here, it's the now.

When you get home, it's the now. Ask yourself sometimes, is this still the now? Am I here

now?

Yes, because there's nothing else, it's always now. There are not many moments, only the form in which this moment appears to you changes continuously. At this moment, the form is this room, people in this room, the voice, the space around you and whatever thoughts may be going through your head, hopefully very few, and whatever emotions may be in here or feelings or physical feelings, that's all part of what the form that this moment is taking.

This is the form. Now, the egoic consciousness or unconsciousness looks at the form and says, not enough, that's not what I wanted. This isn't it.

And then immediately it looks away or it runs away or it internally resists it, it judges it, there's a contraction, not this. This should not be happening. Either this should not be happening or something should be happening, but it isn't.

So the spiritual practice is a simple one, the primordial, the most fundamental spiritual practice is to take your attention into the present moment. You might as well because you never have anything else. You might as well pay attention to this one thing that's all there is ever is the now.

The form changes. So here we have, now, what do we mean when we say the form of the present moment changes continuously? And this is why people believe there are many moments every day, but there aren't.

It's always now, okay. Now, what the mind says, what do you mean? It's a meaningless statement, it's always now.

Or the mind says, you said that half an hour ago or you might even have written it down. There's only the now, okay, what's next? I want more information, please.

I'm collecting information because maybe if I collect enough information, I'll be happy. Okay, let's, you have to go a little deeper into what we call the now. And that involves not just what you perceive.

It involves something else that is always present. Let's just put it this way. By the way, whatever words we now use, especially now that we get to the deeper levels, whatever words I use now are not quite it.

They are only pointers towards it. So I have to mention this now because there are always some people who are very much identified with words, which after all are only verbalized thoughts. And they hang, they grasp with all this.

I don't think you're, I don't like the way you're putting this. I don't agree with this phrase or how you use that expression. Or I don't, that doesn't, it's not quite right.

Of course it's not right because language comes from the world of physical objects and it works on that level. The table is here that works and makes sense. But if even if there, if you look more deeply, that's not true either.

But let's leave that alone. There is no table, of course. There's something else we see it as a table, but it's an energy field.

So let's not get into this. So language is never quite right. So don't, it's only used as a signpost to point beyond itself in spiritual discourse, true spiritual discourse.

Language only has the function of a signpost. So now I mentioned this now so that your mind, not you, because you know the truth, but if your mind is blocking the deep knowing that is already inside you, if your mind is blocking it, your mind is then attaches itself to the words and says, I don't like these words. I would use different words.

Well, fine. Doesn't matter. It's like examining a signpost that says Rome.

And instead of going to Rome, you say, I don't like the way this is written, this signpost. I don't like the color. I don't like the letters.

And then you, okay, I'll write another one. And years later, you're still writing signposts or you're collecting the signposts. So no word we use is absolutely right.

Knowing that we can continue to use words, knowing that they only point to something that's beyond. Okay, here we go. There's something inside you that already knows all this.

And you might, your mind might say, and this is how silly the human mind is, nothing personal. The mind might say, oh no, I don't know the truth. Of course the mind doesn't know the truth.

If you sit here and it feels good to be here because listening to these words is virtually as if you are listening to a truth that you already know, that means you are open to that dimension within yourself that's deeper than thought. Because there you already know. There is already a deep knowing that is not conceptual.

In other words, is not thinking. So this can be sometimes experienced in a gap between two thoughts. And you realize you're awake and present, but not thinking for just a little gap.

Don't try not to think. Just observe the gaps that arise in your life spontaneously from time to time. And you're actually, this is the beginning of realizing that dimension is not by trying to put yourself into some state, but by realizing that this state is already arising in your life spontaneously.

And the mind doesn't even know that because it knows nothing about that which is

beyond the mind. So for example, you may find yourself sometimes being in a state of alive joy. For no particular reason.

Not because something good has just happened. It's just, you look around, perhaps at a cloud or the sky or a tree or an animal, and they feel a deep sense of peace, presence, and aliveness, or another human being. You meet another human being and you don't want anything from him or her.

There's simply an outflow of spacious attention towards another human being. That spaciousness has nothing to do with thinking. And this is why I use the expression space consciousness.

This is not a science fiction term. And it is not something abstract. It is something that is already in you, but is so easily overlooked because this object consciousness, which is the grasping mind, is looking for all the answers on the level of mind objects.

In other words, things that it can grasp. The mind is an interesting fact that in the way we use language, we say the mind grasps it in the sense of understands it. That's what the mind, it says, ah, there it is, now I can examine it.

Or there it is, it's mine. There it is, I can analyze and dissect it and find out all about it. I cut it into pieces.

Okay, even smaller pieces. I can analyze each piece. And even smaller pieces.

And then each piece, I can do a PhD on that. And another PhD on that. And so knowledge proliferates.

And there's so much knowledge, it is vast. Most PhDs are read by three people. Only the great, only the very few in the world who share your specialty, just that field.

Only one or two in the world can understand what their PhD is about. But this is how specialized knowledge has become. And it is object knowledge, object consciousness.

Every thought is a thought form. It is an energy form that has a certain lifespan. Unless you're an unfortunate one and your entire space is occupied by one big proliferating thought, like in the number 23 in the film.

But this is an extreme case. It happens to many people. Completely obsessed with object consciousness.

Almost everybody is completely drawn into the mind's attempt to grasp at things, identify with form, thought forms. It often identifies with external objects, of course. But every object represents really a thought in your head.

Who knows whether there's even anything out there, but we know that there's a thought

that this is my car, or this is my house, or this is my this, and this is my position, this is my position in society, and so on. These are all things that belong to the realm of object consciousness. And almost everybody, except those who are awakening now, which includes everybody who is still here, otherwise they wouldn't be here anymore, except maybe one or two whose partner is holding them down to the chair.

You stay here and listen to this. But anybody who is still here free voluntarily and hasn't left, or is not feeling upset or angry, and if there are one or two who are feeling upset and angry, I suggest you look at that and say, isn't that interesting? There it is.

And by looking at that, a little bit of space, you're not totally possessed by the object consciousness. Just the looking, and I use looking not just meaning visual, just paying attention. Attention is liberating.

Just paying attention and look, bring your awareness to whatever is here. And here we get to the deeper meaning of now. We already mentioned the form of the now continuously changes.

It's like, it's so fleeting, the forms that life takes, that you could describe it as vapor, vaporous stuff. The forms look very solid, but they continuously come and go in your life. The now takes continuously fluctuating forms.

Okay, the form of this now is the room, is the voice, is your body and whatever feelings you have. And is there anything else perhaps that we have been overlooking that's an essential dimension? Yes, there is.

Let's see what that is. You could say, and it has been said by poets and philosophers and some spiritual teachers that the life that we experience is dreamlike because all the forms are so fleeting. And let's just say, okay, we don't know whether this gathering here is actually a dream that you are dreaming or real.

Now, I don't want to go into that too far because that would become perhaps philosophy. And for that, you can go take a course at UCLA if they're still doing philosophy. Here, this moment, the form that this moment takes could be a dream.

But even if it is a dream, and we don't know because is there anything we can know for sure? We cannot know for sure that this is not a dream. It may be that you are having a dream in which a person sits on a stage and says, perhaps this is a dream.

And that person in your dream is saying, perhaps it is possible to wake up out of this dream. And you go, oh, I may be dreaming. But even if it is a dream, there must be something, there must be a field or a space or a light, whatever you want to call it, in which the dream happens.

Otherwise, it wouldn't be. So there must be, we can say the dreamer of the dream, or we

can say the consciousness or the space in which this dream appears and is known. And that, the existence of that, we cannot doubt because otherwise it wouldn't be.

And so fundamentally there is underneath all the appearances of this world, all the forms that continuously arise, come and go, all the so-called many moments, there is another dimension without which none of this could even be. And that is, we need to be very careful now because we are using words and every word that we use belongs to the realm of object consciousness. But we are speaking now of the space that enables this world to be.

Let's call it just for a moment, the inner space. All the experiences in your life, all the things that happen in your life have happened, the so-called past, all the things that happen, happened in a space. Otherwise they couldn't have happened.

Or in a light, you can call it a light. And that is the space that you essentially are underneath the continuous movement of objects of consciousness. There's the objects of consciousness and there is that which underlies all that.

Which is a simple space consciousness, which is not anything. It is not something that you could say, ah, I've got it now. Because the moment you say, there it is, it's not it.

The moment you say, ah, now I know myself. No, you can't. You can only know things about yourself.

In other words, all the objects in your consciousness, all your conditioning that you can know. And it's interesting. Maybe it's even fascinating.

I am so interesting. I'm so fun. My story is so fascinating.

You can talk for a long time and some people have had fascinating lives. This is true, but their fascinating lives in a few years will pop like a soap bubble. And they're popping all over.

Oh, that was so fascinating. And then what's left is, because we are talking about form. It has its place, but it is only a tiny aspect of who you are.

Because the end of all the forms and all the, whether it's your life is fascinating or dreadful mess. It all ends up, as I said before, somewhere as the dash between your date of birth and date of death on your gravestone. That is your life on the level of form.

Whether it's been fascinating or dreadful misery, it all comes to the same thing. A two inch dash. Or if you made it in this world, then you buy a huge one.

And then the dash is five inches. Now to the ego, because the ego knows nothing but form, this is extremely depressing. And if you were sitting here as the ego, you would say, only the ego, you would say, I don't want to hear any more of this.

This is so depressing. I want whatever it is the ego wants. It wants many things.

That a life that knows only object consciousness, a human life that is confined to just the play of object consciousness is no matter, even if it's rich in events or achievements, it is impoverished. And in fact, true achievements as a creative act is not even possible if your life is consumed only by object consciousness. Because any true realization, any original, even thought, most thinking is conditioned thinking.

It's repetitive, it's old. Anything that is fresh, new, empowered, anything that is beautiful, a beautiful creation or deep realization does not come out of the accumulated object consciousness. It comes out of the space, the space that is underneath that, the space of awareness, the space of consciousness without an object.

And you find it by directing attention away from the world of object consciousness, which ultimately is thoughts, sense perceptions, even sense perceptions become translated into thought. Direct attention away. Now, where do you direct attention?

You cannot make space consciousness into an object of attention. Because if you make space consciousness into an object of attention, you have more object consciousness. And that is why Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be observed.

You can't say, ah, I've got it. There it is, object space consciousness. I have it now.

I have achieved space consciousness. So it cannot become an object of your attention because it is attention. So when you look, you look at something, let's say you can try this out when you're a moment in nature or anywhere in your room or here.

If you look at something for the first moment, a tree, a flower, an animal, whatever it may be, you look at something, your gaze falls upon it. And there's, let's say it's a beautiful flower. And if you now need to be very vigilant and observe yourself, the moment you look at that flower and you truly see the beauty and something within your response, there is a space before the mind comes in with labels.

And that is the space of space consciousness in which the flower appears. It is the light of consciousness in which the flower appears. So you have, we can do the same about this room.

We know all the things that we can perceive in this room or about ourselves. All these objects that arise in consciousness at this moment, at this moment, these objects are arising in consciousness. Oh yes, interesting.

Is it possible to be aware of another dimension that underlies all these objects that arise in consciousness? Is it possible to be aware of yourself as the space in which the various continuously changing objects arise? Is it possible to sense the presence that you are as

that which underlies all the things that have form, that arise as form and arise and subside?

Come and go, come and go. And you are, at this moment, you are the space for this. For this room, you are the space for this voice.

You are the space for whatever you experience in your mind, whatever thoughts, you're the space even for the thought. If the thought does not absorb your attention completely, you can be the space for the thought. The moment, for example, you realize, there goes a thought, and I'm verbalizing it now, but when you realize it, there's no verbalizing, there's simply the awareness that there is a thought, an old thought perhaps, or a thought that says, this should be, this should not be, why don't they, and so on and so on.

Another one of those thoughts. And the awareness is there and says, oh, and the awareness sees the thought come and go, or an emotion, an upset, this shouldn't be, okay, and suddenly there's an awareness that is aware of this form that arises. That is you.

That is space. And that is, in essence, the now. That is the deeper meaning of now, because now is not what happens, now is the space for it.

Now is the space of consciousness, let's say, but don't, consciousness is just a word, so it's just a pointer. You can only understand it and knowing at this moment by sensing within and sensing yourself as the underlying presence for whatever you perceive or think or feel. You are the presence or the space for that.

And when I put this into language, when I say you sense yourself as the underlying space, we've already gone wrong because language has a structure which requires a subject and an object. So when we put this into language, I say you sense your very self, it looks as if you had made yourself into an object. I feel myself, but that's only due to the structure of language.

In this realization that you realize yourself as the eternal subject for whatever happens. And this eternal subject is not anything that can be defined in form, anything that can be defined through language or through thought or through any opinion, which is thought. Your essential self is totally beyond anything that you could say about it or put words or thoughts to or labels.

It cannot be defined. It can only be known not as an object, but known as the subject. So all these words are continuously pointing to this realization of yourself as the underlying presence in which the world and all the things that come and go appear.

So a very, perhaps the most direct way of not just knowing or sensing that when you sit here and say, yes, and again, you can never grasp it. You cannot grasp it because you

are it. So you cannot grasp yourself.

You are it. Now, how can I know this in my daily life is the question. What do I do in my daily life which one object after another arises and demands my attention?

Every object and every thought that comes, this is important, deal with me now, give me attention, pulls you in. The phone rings, the computer, the emails. You haven't answered my email.

Okay, then the next thing. Oh, and he wants this and she wants that. One thing after another, it pulls in your attention.

You lose yourself in the world, in the world which is the world of form, which includes your mind, lost in your mind, lost in the world, completely ignorant of who you are in essence. And that is impoverished, a life that is impoverished, not knowing that. But many, there are, of course, spiritual seekers who have been seeking to know that dimension for many years.

The mistake that they make, if they haven't, if they're still spiritual seekers, first of all, they seek it in the future like everybody else is seeking something in the future and they seek realization in the future. And they seek it as if it could be an object in their experience. I want this great realization they're all talking about.

One day I will going to get there. No, you're not because one day is now and you're not looking to now. One day is the future projection.

It's here already. But how do you know that it's here? You're just saying that no, you can.

The easiest way to know this is to have a different relationship with the present moment because the present moment is and remains the point of entry into that deeper state. Even though on the surface, it may look unsatisfactory, it is always concealing the deeper dimension. But you can only know that if you find a relationship with the present moment that is non-resistant.

Internally. Where you say to the present moment, I realize that you are life. I realize that life is always now.

I realize that apart from now, there can be no life. And so, since I realize that the now is all there ever is, I might as well become friendly with the now and honor it and give it my attention as it arises in whatever form and say, there you are. This is what is at this moment.

And I surrender my resistance to what is. That is the end of the ego. To be able to do that, there already needs to be something in you that is beyond ego.

Only from there can you surrender. So anybody who can hear this message and the

possibility of living in a way that treats the present moment as a friend rather than an enemy or an obstacle or a means to an end. If you can say to the present moment, there you are.

And give it your fullest attention knowing that past and future are relatively unimportant. They're only of practical purpose, useful for practical purposes, but not for living. Not for finding the fullness of life, as Jesus puts it.

I want you to have life in its fullness, he said. What's he talking about? Objects in space or space?

Is he talking about life forms? Is he talking about the shopping malls? The fullness of life, is it there?

No, he talks about something that is beyond form. It is life itself beyond form. And so to have the fullness of life, you need to come to an openness towards the present moment.

And then for whatever arises in the now, I recommend the mantra. That good mantra is something, as you know, it's a very little phrase, a helpful pointer. The mantra itself is nothing.

It only points to what matters. The mantra is, if you remember nothing else, hopefully you won't remember much after this evening, perhaps just this little thing. And it concerns your relationship with the present moment.

And the mantra is, can I be the space for this? And I'm phrasing it as a question, not as an affirmation, because the question is more open. It invites you to find out.

It invites you to enter into the state where you say to the present moment, there you are. Even if it looks unsatisfactory. Even if something has just gone wrong.

The thing has just broken down. You've just lost something. Something has just been gone up in flames.

Whatever life is fleeting, the forms are very fleeting. And often the present moment, the mind would say, this shouldn't be happening. But it is.

No, but it is, is, is, is. You can't argue with that. Or if you do, you suffer.

So you become aligned with life internally. The ego is continuously out of alignment with life, which is now. And the ego is that way.

Life is here, always happening. And the ego is trying to get there. Not even trying, not even...

It's here. So you go more fully into life. And you do not demand that this moment should

be different from the way it is.

You surrender the demand. And it's because you see it's dysfunctional. You've done it, and this is nothing personal, because we all inherit that.

You've done it all your life. Reduce this moment. Demand that it should be different.

And now try something else. Become friendly with the is-ness of life. Are you then condemned?

Are you... Does this mean you're going to be stuck in this undesirable now? No.

First, you open yourself to what is. And you look, and you take it in with your attention. This now.

This, there it is. If action is required, it will come out of the state of attention or awareness. You look, and you act.

Or you look and do nothing. If nothing can be done, nothing, no action is required, nothing. You simply surrender to what is at this moment.

In some situations, you need to act. In many other situations, action would be futile. You just have to wait.

And you don't even wait. You say, this is what is now. That's fine.

Can I be the space for this? Somebody falls ill, you fall ill. You lose something.

You lose your job. Little things go wrong. Big things go wrong.

Can I be the space for this? And then you accept the is-ness of the present moment. And that, out of that simple step, arises an entirely new state of consciousness.

Because when you accept the is-ness of now, you become the space for what is. But you were that already, but you didn't know it. So you become what you already always were, but unconsciously.

You were already the space for whatever is, the conscious field in which things arise, but you didn't know it because you were so drawn into the world of objects that you lost yourself in every arising object. Unaware of your essential being, which is another word we could use to describe, to talk of the space that you are. Unaware of your essential being, which is timeless.

The dimension, this essential being-ness, which is sometimes another word you could use is the I am, before it becomes this or that. The being-ness or the I am-ness. I am and being is the same thing.

To be is the infinitive of I am. They look like two completely different words, but they are the same word. The being that you are, which is deeper than the form.

The form is, we could, if you want to use words, existence. The existence is, existence means to stand out. X means out.

You exist as a particular form, yes, for a little while, until the dash on the gravestone. You exist, you stand out for a little while as this form, and there's something in humans that wants to stand out, and that's fine. It has its place.

It says, here I am. Okay, but you are not, I am for that long up here, because it requires an effort to stand out. You go, here I am.

I am, I have achieved, or I am the greatest failure. I'm greater failure than you. I affirm my specialness as the great failure, or I affirm my specialness as the great hero who has achieved whatever, and then it all collapses around you after a while.

In the world of form, nothing lasts. We all know when Napoleon ended up very frustrated, and he sat on this island the last few years, or now. It all dissolved.

All the break battles, it all gone up like puffs of smoke. That's the world of form. It's in the nature of the world of form to be ephemeral, fleeting.

So there you are, and you lose yourself in that, and you think that is of the greatest importance, whatever happens in this fleeting world of continuously fluctuating forms. That's very frustrating. Some people know that already when they're 25.

Others have to live to 75 and still don't know it, that you can't find anything lasting there. And so underneath that is, has always been the timeless consciousness that you essentially are. You were always, you will always be, you always are.

It's the most correct statement. You always are already the space for the world because you are, in essence, consciousness itself. That is nothing to do with thought, and that is the dimension that is beyond, we could say it is deeper than thought, but I sometimes put it in a different, as you know, high and low or deep and are very relative terms.

There is ultimately no such thing as high when you leave earth. There's no up and down anymore. So we can say deep, the deeper consciousness, or we can say the transcendent timeless consciousness.

We are rising above compulsive thinking. And compulsive thinking, by compulsive thinking, I mean unconscious thinking that is conditioned by the past. Humanity's destiny now, and it's already happening, is to rise above thinking.

Then thinking will have found its place. It will no longer dominate your existence. You are moving.

The shift is from being a predominantly thinking entity with a few lucid moments to being a predominantly aware being. The shift from thinking to awareness. Awareness is spacious attention.

And then thinking can actually be fruitful. No longer the old addictive thinking, because if you only know thinking, thinking is addictive. Can't get enough of it.

Why can't you get enough of it? Because it keeps the object, it keeps the mind, the egoic mind going, and it tells you who you are. I need to think about me and my life.

And then most people are only too happy to tell others about me and my life. And often me and my life consists of their complaints about life and their complaints about other people and what they've done to them, or what life has done to me, and what my ex-husband, my ex-wife did to me. These are the stories that make up people's lives.

And they don't, it's so, what is there beyond that? Beyond that is who you are. The presence, the consciousness.

Sometimes we use the word stillness to describe that state underneath the mind. But underneath may not be the right word, because it is really a rising above thinking. We already mentioned drugs or alcohol or getting tired as ways of falling below thinking.

And then this is not the way we are going, regression. We are moving beyond thinking. And then thinking becomes a beautiful tool because there's no sense of self in it.

There's only the function of thinking. And it's a wonderful tool, and it will be so powerful when it's no longer burdened with dysfunction. When the ego is identified with the mind, thinking is, 95% of it is dysfunctional.

And then the dysfunction will disappear from thinking. And you do not rely on thinking anymore to tell you who you are. And equally important, you don't rely on thinking anymore in your relationships with other human beings.

So a different dimension comes into your relationships, a dimension that is beyond object consciousness, where you immediately have little opinions and judgments about other people. And you are relating not to another human being, but to a screen of mental definitions about that human being. There's no meeting at all.

There's no true relationship. So the ability to be with people, with nature, in that space of simple, alert attention, increasingly comes into your life, where you go into a situation and you're not there as a conditioned thinker, but as a simple, spacious presence. And you look, you go to the meeting, and you are there as an awareness, a field of awareness.

And I'm not just talking about it at this very moment. You can be, you can sit here as a

thinker. What's he talking about awareness?

I can't quite figure out what that means. Of course not, because awareness, you can't find out what awareness is, except by being aware. You can't find out what awakening is, except by awakening.

Awakening means to step out of identification with thinking and be the presence. Oh, you mean that? Yes, just that.

And then at first, from the point of view of the mind, it looks as if nothing significant had happened when this shift occurs. And it's not a shift for most people that happens all at once. It is a gradual stepping out of identification with thinking, a rising of presence, a gradual increasing ability to be with things, to perceive against the background of spacious awareness, rather than continual judgment or definition, an ability to sense your own presence beyond any thoughts or words and derive your sense of who you are from that, rather than your personal history, which of course consists of a bundle of thoughts. Nothing wrong with that. You don't need to forget your personal history, but if that's all you think you are, then you've missed out on the most important thing in life, which is finding who you are beyond your personal history.

So we enter into that new state and then because it's a gradual process, you fall back a few times into identification with thinking, negative states, complaints, blaming people or situations for my problems, which of course I created through my thinking, but I don't know that. And so I blame somebody else for that. And then it develops into a thought form that proliferates and then it, no space, loss of space, dreadful condition, normal.

And all the great, all the creatures of humanity pointed to this shift, the simple possibility of living so aligned with the present moment that you know yourself as the space for whatever arises. And whenever you know yourself as the space, you're not fighting what is, you become one with what is internally. And when you become one with what is, the very intelligence that underlies the entire universe then operates.

And any situation that needs action, then it will arise out of that oneness with the situation, right action arises, right words arise out of your oneness with what is, out of the space that you are when you accept this moment as it is, that simple thing. And as a little reminder, can I be the space for this? And conditions arise continuously in your life, good, bad, good, bad, bad, bad, good, good.

They arise continuously. And more and more, you just are with what is without this always immediately naming it as good or bad. It just is.

And the totality of the universe has brought about the form of this moment, of course, because everything is connected to everything else. So the totality of the universe has brought about the form that this moment takes. It couldn't be otherwise.

So I might as well say, there it is and be the space. Which I am already. But now knowingly be the space for that.

And then you are no longer disconnected from life. Life is no longer experienced as hostile as it still is for many people. But the universe then becomes benign and even helpful because then you are connected with the one intelligence.

So whenever you enter and you just try it out for a week, two weeks, whenever you can, be one with the present moment. Even especially when before you would have reacted against it. Especially when before the mind would have complained.

When before the mind would have blamed somebody for my problems to illusions. There are no problems apart from the problems created by your thinking mind. What do you mean?

I mean, there are no problems except what the mind is doing. Apart from the mind, there are challenges. And the challenge can only arise at this moment.

The challenge can only be dealt with in this moment. Challenges are real and life never leaves you alone. It gives you one challenge after another because otherwise you would go to sleep.

It's that which keeps you awake and that is the food for your practice. And that's why we said at the beginning, if you feel upset here as you came in, that's great. You have something to work with.

What does that mean? It means you have something that you can bring your awareness to and be the space for that. And through something that before was upsetting, it can actually take you into the space underneath that you are.

Use any conditions that arise and no longer demand, which the ego does, and that's why the ego is so frustrated all the time, no longer demand that a particular condition should make you happy. Condition means a situation. It means a place or it means a human being.

This demand that he should do this to make me happy. She should do that to make me happy. This place is not good enough.

It's not making me happy. This situation, a new situation you go into, should make me happy, but it isn't making me happy. Situations, people, places are not there to make you happy.

They are there to wake you up. So the world is not here to make you happy. Oh, well, that's a relief because it hasn't done it so far.

The world is not here to make you happy. It's to wake you up. Well, or it can pull you into

greater sleep.

There's the two possibilities. Conditions are here to be transcended. Internally.

So that internally you go beyond dependency on external conditions. And when I say external conditions, it includes the conditions of your mind, whatever thoughts are being produced in your mind. You go, you transcend that.

You go, transcend means you go beyond. And in other words, you realize that you are already beyond, essentially have always been beyond, but didn't know it. The timeless dimension of who you are.

And then the great liberation is you don't have any particular opinions anymore about who you are. You just are, because you just are the space. You are the consciousness for this moment.

That's all you are. You don't need an accumulation of thoughts called opinions that tell you who you are. Not good enough.

Better than. Not as good as. Hope to become better.

Did bad things in the past. Did great things in the past, but not anymore. Whatever.

Hope to do great things in the future. Fine on this level. Why not do great things and have great, say, okay, I want to become a great actor.

Be in LA. I want to become a great tennis player. Okay.

But don't look to that for happiness, for fulfillment, for finding yourself. That's fine. You play with the forms of life.

It's beautiful. But don't take them too seriously. There are many unhappy actors, even those that made it.

And some, quite a few, are awakening spiritually because they have everything and realize, oh, that's not it. Okay. Then the illusion that something else that they could achieve would make them happy is gone because there's nothing else that they could possibly achieve.

And so the spiritual dimension, either the spiritual dimension opens up, which is they recognize the timeless within, or they become very unhappy and then try to take drugs so that they feel a little bit less unhappy. Can I be the space for this? Simple question, a simple pointer.

Okay. After you've used that question, you need to go and say, okay, what does it mean to be the space? Okay.

Spacious attention, just this. You look, you listen, and you know yourself as the awareness, as the space for whatever is happening. And then what's happening or not happening, is not that important anymore.

It's not so important that it can make you unhappy. The world then loses two things. It loses its ability to fulfill you because you realize it can't.

It also loses its sense of threat because otherwise when you're in the ego, there's always this dilemma. On the one hand, you're hoping that the future and the things that you could acquire in the future are going to make you happy and fulfilled. On the other hand, of course, the ego knows deep down the future or time, which is past and future.

Time, of course, is going to kill me eventually. So it looks to time, hoping to get this or that, but knowing deep down, eventually it's all going to be taken away from me. But let's not think about that.

And all you then end up with is this moment, all there ever is, and being the space for that. That's the shift in consciousness. So if you're a spiritual seeker, let go of the future.

You're not going to find enlightenment there or liberation. Just what is. It's already here and you are already it.

Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (3:21:08 - 3:21:19)

First of all, let me just ask you what happens to you when you have those moments, the moment of silence like we just, we had right there. What goes on in your mind?

[Speaker 1] (3:21:20 - 3:23:53)

Well, you have what we call silence is an external phenomenon. You would say that's the absence of noise. And then you have stillness.

The way I use the word stillness is the inner silence and stillness or inner silence means that there is a gap in between thoughts. So there is a little bit of space inside your mind, so to speak. And in that space, you're fully aware and fully present, but there's no conceptual thinking going on.

So there are no words arising in that space. And that's what we call stillness. So most people have a voice in their head, which is the continuous thought processes that they are usually identified with.

So for most people, that is their basic reality is the voice in the head. And they are so identified with these continuously arising thought processes that they don't even know that they are identified with every thought that comes. They don't know that there is a

voice in the head because they are the voice in the head.

So to find that there is another dimension inside you that we could call stillness, we could have other names for it, where this mental noise is not operating for a while, that is like finding the depths inside yourself that perhaps you didn't know was there. And that essentially is the spiritual dimension. So it really is about finding that dimension in yourself where the continuous mental noise for a while subsides.

So when your question then is, what goes on in your mind? We could say nothing really goes on as such. There's still an awareness of noises that you hear or your eyes may be open.

You might be looking at things, but you're not labeling the noises that you hear. You're not interpreting them. They're just there.

You know they are there. Or if there are visual perceptions, you're not labeling compulsively this compulsive labeling that most people live with. That subsides for a while, and that's an incredible liberation.

[Speaker 5] (3:23:54 - 3:24:19)

Why, I mean, I guess in a practical sense, what would you recommend to people who are going to be watching this, who are having their very busy days, you know, grabbing half a cup of coffee, running to work with, you know, the half a bagel in their hand, missing the bus, reading the paper, listening to their iPhone on their BlackBerry, what common practice should they be doing during the day to get to that place?

[Speaker 1] (3:24:20 - 3:29:34)

Yeah, good question. Because most people's reality is that one thing after another arises, one thought after another, one thing after another that you need to deal with. And in most people's lives, there's no space at all.

And if they talk about space, they'll tell you, I don't have time for space. There's so much going on. I don't have time to sit down and take, but that is not true.

That's actually the mind speaking. The thought processes want to carry on. They want, they have a certain momentum of their own.

But everybody has time for a moment of space. And that could start with a simple thing like taking one conscious in and out breath occasionally while you're waiting at a bus stop or at the traffic light or while you're going up or down in the elevator instead of mentally projecting yourself forward to the next thing that you have to do, that you're going to or that you haven't done. Why not take a moment when you're simply conscious of your breath, you're breathing in, the breath is always there.

So you just put some attention on that. One conscious in breath, feel the air going into the body and one conscious out breath. And during that space, you have taken attention away from the voice in the head, as I call it.

And a little bit of space has opened up inside you. And that feels good. And in that little space, you feel a bit more alive.

There's a certain aliveness and power in that space. It's not just nothingness. There is a power in there.

And so that's one thing you can do occasionally everybody has time for one conscious in and out breath. And there's so much time that people spend waiting for things. But usually while they wait, they're immersed in thinking, but why not use the waiting time to just become more conscious?

So this is one thing they can do, take a conscious breath. Another thing I recommend is to get in touch with the, what I call the inner body, which means to feel that the body, your body is alive, to get in touch with a sense of aliveness inside your body. And sometimes people don't know what I'm talking about.

So I always recommend if they don't know what I'm talking about, can you find out if, can you feel a certain aliveness in your hands? So you have to direct your attention, your inattention to that and feel, I can feel a little bit of warmth or tingling inside my hands. Now to the mind, that's a meaningless thing.

It says I have other more important things to worry about than my hands, but it is vitally important to get in touch with that basic aliveness so that you are not only up here in the head all the time. You become more rooted in yourself, more deeply rooted in being. And you can start with a simple thing like feeling the aliveness in your hands.

And if you can do that, you can also feel it perhaps in your feet and in your arms and your legs. And perhaps then suddenly you feel your entire body is alive. Every cell is alive.

Most people have lost that sense of basic aliveness because all their attention is continuously absorbed by thought processes. I'm not saying don't think anymore. Of course, we need to think to operate in this world.

And thinking is a wonderful thing. It's a wonderful tool. But not to be able to get out of it at all, that is a very dreadful state really.

And most of one's thinking is not creative. Psychologists have examined the nature of thought and they found that 98 to 99% of one's thoughts are very repetitive. They turn to be the same thoughts.

So a lot of thinking that goes on is actually quite useless. And not only useless, it's often very negative. And the more negative thinking you do, the more negative thoughts you have, the more the body responds with corresponding negative emotions.

Anxiety, regret, fear, guilt, all kinds of things that always the body always reflects your thought processes. That's the emotion reflects your thoughts. So just to experience that you are not your thoughts.

You are the awareness behind your thoughts. And to know that, you have to find that little space inside. So I've just given these two ways of doing it.

And you can do it during the day. It doesn't take long. Everybody has time for that.

Because there's so much waiting time in one's life, even in a busy life.

[Speaker 5] (3:29:35 - 3:30:20)

You know, I want to ask you, one of the things that was so interesting to me that you started with The Power of Now and then have continued in this book was about this little voice and how it can contribute to conflict with other people. Because you made a list of those emotions, but the other voice in there, that ego voice can be envy, can be the voice that you think that something's been done to you by somebody else. It brings up these kinds of resentments.

And this is a very exciting thought because it has to do with not just little conflicts between people, but larger conflicts. And so can you talk about that voice and how we have to still it as far as our relationships with other people and perhaps even other countries and all kinds of things like that?

[Speaker 1] (3:30:20 - 3:33:49)

Yes. Now, because people are so identified with the voice in their head, after a while, certain thoughts tend to be repetitive thoughts that one thinks and a certain mind-based image arises in the mind that they are thoughts that you identify with as yourself, the memories that you have, the things that you have done or the things that people did to you and all kinds of things that you identify with mentally that you think that is who I am.

So we call that the ego. The ego is a mind-made sense of self, me based on mind activity. So now the ego has a certain structure to it.

It needs certain things to survive. It needs to emphasize the otherness, as I call it, of others. So it needs to judge people.

It needs to immediately conceptualize and define a person that you meet. Immediately, you will find judgments arising and comparison arriving. How the image of who I am, how does that compare to the other?

This person. Inferiority, superiority. The ego needs enemies because by creating an enemy outside, somebody who is against me, I emphasize that sense of self, the mind-made sense of self.

So there is a basic dysfunction built into the structure of the ego. And so that works both on a personal level and on a collective level because there's the collective ego of tribes and nations or whatever the collective derives its identity from. It could be a religion, too.

And so you have the struggle between tribes, nations, religions against the others, the non-believers or the evil others. Continuously, you have that playing itself out in history. There's always the other tribe, the other nation, the other religion, or even the other sect within the same religion is the enemy.

So there's this built-in tendency to make others into enemy. Why is that? Because the ego needs to emphasize the otherness.

By creating enemies outside, you have a stronger sense of who you are, but it's a false sense of who you are. An example of that in Nazi Germany, for example, they ended up making the whole world into an enemy. There were enemies in the East, enemies in the West, everywhere.

And of course, at that time, people had a very strong sense of national identity. Very few people committed suicide at that time because they were so immersed in this false sense of self that gave them a temporary feeling of, now we know who we are. So the boundary between self and other becomes very rigid.

[Speaker 5] (3:33:50 - 3:33:53)

We are different than everyone else, and we are better than everyone else.

[Speaker 1] (3:33:53 - 3:36:06)

Yes. And similar thing, some religions, they emphasize the evil non-believers. And once you have conceptualized another tribe or another group, you can no longer feel their humanity and their aliveness because you have transformed them into a mental concept.

You attach a label to them. Once you've done that, violence becomes possible and you don't feel anymore what you are doing to another human being because you have already dehumanized the other human being by transforming them into a mental concept. But before you did that, you had already done it to yourself without knowing it because you had identified with certain mental concepts and said, that's me.

The collective one is, that is us. That is our identity. That is who we are.

These are our beliefs. That's our history, whatever it is. So a false, you already derive your sense of self only from concepts, and then you impose the same thing on others.

And then there's the structural need then to make that even stronger, so the enemies arise. So humans, if you read a history book, you'll see continuous, completely senseless and pointless warfare between nations. The worst of it was the 20th century.

And so when you see that, then there's no doubt that there is a very strong element of dysfunction in the human mind. And really, this is what we are addressing when we become more conscious of compulsive thinking and we become conscious that we have been deriving our sense of self from what we've been telling ourselves in our minds of who we are, in other words, from thinking, then suddenly we see this operating in ourselves. We see this unconscious process operating in ourselves.

And by seeing it, another dimension has arisen. I call it awareness or presence.

[Speaker 5] (3:36:07 - 3:36:41)

You know, I'm fascinated about, you know, I've kind of leaped over to your new book. And of course, one of the, I guess, most inspiring aspects of reading your story, especially, you know, I'm a mother of a teenager and teenagers can get very low on themselves sometimes. And as all people have moments of great darkness and you hope that there'll be a moment that they'll see the light or something that will happen to get them over.

And so I'm wondering if you can describe to me your moment of great darkness and how that turned into light.

[Speaker 1] (3:36:43 - 3:39:50)

Well, at that time, I was 29. And for most of my 20s, I had been living in states of depression and anxiety. I was very rarely, moments of happiness were very, very rare.

So I was basically an unhappy human being, like many these days. And so plagued with these deep depressions. And if it wasn't depression, it was very acute anxiety.

And one night I had to, I woke up in the middle of the night and again feeling this intense fear and anxiety and almost nausea. I didn't like who I was. I didn't like the world.

And a thought came into my head that said, I can't live with myself any longer. And then the thought came back a couple of times. And in that moment, I became conscious of this thought.

And what does this thought mean? I can't live with myself. There's an I and there's a self that I cannot live with.

So am I one or am I two? So I just looked at this, the structure of this sentence, this thought that had arisen. And at that moment, I realized that not, when I talk about it now, I'm explaining something that I didn't understand at that time conceptually, but it just happened.

It was an insight that happened non-conceptually. I realized that the unhappy self wasn't who I am. The unhappy person with its continuous succession of unhappy thoughts about my life and what's going to happen to me and regrets about the past and fears about the future, all that, that was the unhappy self.

And I suddenly, because this sentence arose, I can't live with myself. I realized there's a self and here's I. And there was separation happened between the unhappy self and the I.

What exactly that meant, I didn't know at the time. I just realized the next day I woke up and I felt deep peace inside myself, which never completely left me since then. And only much later, I understood that the I was the stillness or the consciousness that I am beyond thought.

And the self that I couldn't live with was the mind-made self, consisting of habitual thought patterns and emotions that go with these thought patterns. And that wasn't real. So that collapsed.

The mind-made sense of self was no longer there. And there was simply a sense of presence or beingness, non-problematic beingness, aliveness. And that was, I realized who I am, not a mind-made self, but something that cannot really be defined.

It's consciousness itself.

[Speaker 5] (3:39:53 - 3:40:10)

As you had been kind of spiraling into this moment, had you sought other remedies? Had you gone to psychotherapy? Had you gone through religions?

Had you been on any medications? Did you go other routes before you came to that?

[Speaker 1] (3:40:10 - 3:42:32)

Well, I'd been looking for answers. I was in a kind of dilemma. And so I was looking for some answers.

Mostly the answers I was looking for was intellectual answers. I've been reading philosophy. I've been reading psychology.

I hadn't been to any psychotherapy or anything like that, nor had I taken any drugs of any kind. But there was a kind of search, almost I could say a desperate search for some

answer. But I was, including I had read some spiritual philosophers without really understanding them.

I looked at the religions, again, without really understanding it. And so it wasn't a gradual process of understanding. It was a very sudden disruption of the usual thought processes and the arising of something new.

But then later, as I began to understand what had happened to me, I realized that this is everybody's dilemma. The unhappiness that I had been living in, that state of unhappiness, really, to a greater or lesser extent, this is how most human beings live. Moments of happiness are few and far between, but it can be otherwise.

And I'm not saying that you should be seeking happiness as such. But you should be more conscious of a dimension in you that is deeper than thinking. That's where freedom lies.

In every human being, there is this possibility of finding that inner freedom, a dimension that is not conditioned by your past. And then you no longer derive your sense of who you are from your personal history, because that's a dreadful restriction to derive your sense of who you are from your personal history only. It doesn't mean you no longer have a personal history.

Of course, you remember your past. But that is no longer where you get your sense of identity from. You have your memories, but your sense of identity of who you are comes directly out of the present moment, the inner space of presence, of consciousness.

[Speaker 5] (3:42:32 - 3:42:38)

Tell me why you chose to live in Vancouver. Why do you live there?

[Speaker 1] (3:42:39 - 3:44:26)

I was living in England for many years, and I woke up one morning and I knew I had to move to the west coast of North America. I didn't know why. Just a very strong impulse came.

Although I liked England, I still feel a deep inner link with England. I wasn't born in England, but I spent most of my adult life there. I just had to obey this impulse.

It wasn't just that it came for a few minutes. The next day, it was still there. The next week, it was still there.

I felt, okay, I got ready. A few months later, I took a plane. I didn't know where it would be, California or wherever.

At first, I thought California, kind of the image that immediately came. I knew one person

in Vancouver. I flew over to Vancouver, stayed for two or three weeks.

Still not knowing why I was there, took a Greyhound bus to California, stayed with a friend for a week or two, and then suddenly, this strong impulse came to get a notebook and a notepad and start. The writing stream came. That became the power of now.

When my visa expired, I had to go back to England, and the writing stream stopped. A couple of months later, I went back to Vancouver, and there, immediately, it started again. So, I could only write on the West Coast, it seemed.

I moved back and forth between Vancouver, living on my savings, running out very quickly. The book was written partly in California and partly in Vancouver, and then circumstances arose that told me Vancouver is the place to be, to settle, at least for the time being. The book was published there.

[Speaker 5] (3:44:26 - 3:44:30)

Well, you could live anywhere now, obviously, and so why do you still stay there?

[Speaker 1] (3:44:30 - 3:46:02)

Well, I still, I'm very much, I love the energy field. On the West Coast, generally, certain parts of California also, and Vancouver and surrounding area there, there's a certain stillness that surrounds, I can feel it even in the city, although there's car noise, the noise of engines and all kinds of noises, and yet, it's almost, one could say, it's surrounded by a field of stillness. Perhaps it is because you have, on one side, you have the huge ocean, on the other side, you have the mountains, not densely inhabited, very few people live there.

So, you have that great sense of nature also still there, and the energy field is very gentle. I always feel it when I cross the border, coming from Washington State, moving into British Columbia, the moment you cross the border, you feel the energy field changes, and you go, ah, there's suddenly, oh, it's much more quiet, much calmer now, the energy, you can feel that. I like the shift also, going into the States, you feel a certain nervousness in the energy field, which can occasionally be exhilarating, too.

I actually like the change from the calmness of British Columbia, and then moving back into the more nervous energy field of the States, back and forth.

[Speaker 5] (3:46:03 - 3:46:07)

We like to think, I mean, here in the East, that there's more of a nervous energy field. Do you sense it here?

[Speaker 1] (3:46:08 - 3:46:08)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 5] (3:46:09 - 3:46:48)

And we're all very worried, busy people, and so, you know, when you come from the West Coast with your ideas of peace, and, you know, you've got this beautiful climate, and it's all this, and so people from the East will go, well, easy for him to say, okay? Isn't that nice? You know, when they're sitting out there, and on their mountain or something, right?

And so, you know, so do you wonder, I mean, when you, do you take offense if people say, well, that's sort of West Coast thinking, that's sort of, I don't know, it's a self-help guru sort of, you know, thing. It's a trend. How do you respond to things like that?

[Speaker 1] (3:46:48 - 3:47:43)

Well, self-help is a great thing. Of course, yes, it's true that there are many superficial books and trends in the so-called self-help movement, but basically, self-help is a wonderful thing, and there's some of the greatest books in history were basically self-help books. So whatever, for example, the Meditations by Marcus Aurelius, recently written 2,000 years ago, books like that.

Basically, they are self-help books. Self-help, it's true that many new things began on the West Coast, but this is not confined to the West Coast, or it's not confined even to one particular culture. This is spreading all throughout Western Europe, too.

People are very responsive to this now in England, in Germany, in Scandinavia, in Holland.

[Speaker 5] (3:47:43 - 3:48:07)

I guess I don't even want to say so much about the West Coast. It's more just, you're thinking, you know, it becomes part of popular culture, this book. But you're comfortable that it's part of popular culture, that it's on, that the media has taken it up.

You're comfortable with that because it gets your message out.

[Speaker 1] (3:48:07 - 3:50:08)

It gets the message out. It reaches millions of people, and many of whom are actually ready for some inner change because this is not adopting some new belief system. It's not a new religion.

It's nothing to do with beliefs. It's to do with an actual, immediate experience, and it's not even to do with a feel-good thing, or an emotional thing, or an emotional high. It's not that.

It's something much more simple and much more basic. Now, the fact that the book has reached so many people, with the help of Oprah, of course, it also means that it reaches many people also who are not ready for it. So they open the book, they read a few pages, and they see this is completely meaningless.

So they put it back and say, this is rubbish. That's fine. They're not ready for it, or maybe they need to find their spirituality in some different way, or maybe they need to go through more suffering before they're ready for it because it seems that humans need to go through a certain amount of suffering before they're ready for inner change.

True inner change. And this is what it is about. So whether you live in Vancouver, or Toronto, or London, or Berlin, it doesn't really matter.

When the time is ready, then suddenly you will pick up a book like that, if that's how it comes to you, and suddenly you will read, and something from within will respond, and you'll recognize there's a truth that basically I have known already. It's not entirely new. When you read a truly real spiritual book, it's never that you say, oh, that's totally new.

It's a recognition of what deep down you already knew. And that's a wonderful thing when you recognize the truths that are there. But of course, the book then reaches other people who are not yet ready, who don't recognize it.

So either they throw the book away, or they write a review about it and say, this doesn't make sense at all.

[Speaker 5] (3:50:09 - 3:50:21)

You know, we're talking about the power of now, but we have to talk about the power of Oprah. A very powerful force she is. Tell me about working with Oprah.

What's that like?

[Speaker 1] (3:50:23 - 3:53:26)

Well, the wonderful thing is that Oprah basically is no different on camera from how she is off camera. So I observed that she doesn't play roles when she's on camera. She's simply herself before she goes on, sits down in front of the camera.

She's the same person when she gets up. So she, and this is quite rare on TV personality, not to project some kind of role, to play a role. And because she is herself, that's what people respond to.

She's the genuineness in her. They recognize that. And so she told me that story of how it happened for her.

She was, I believe, in her 20s and she was a news reader at some local TV station. And

her great aim in life, she said, was to be like Barbara Walters. That was her image.

I want to be like that. And so she was reading the news one day, very kind of trying to project this confident image of the news reader. And she was reading a number of countries, some news item.

And she came to a country and she read country, England, France, Canada. And she said, did I just say Canada? Of course I mean Canada.

And then she started laughing on the news. And at that moment, the role that she was playing collapsed and she could feel that power and aliveness coming through. And that was the beginning of her true career.

So she had to give up of that mental image of wanting to be Barbara Walters or this or that. And just could be, when the role collapsed, she could be herself. And that's where the power comes from.

And now, of course, her main passionate interest is spirituality, to bring this to people, to use her function in this world and her incredible influence to bring spirituality to millions of people. As I said to her, your role is an essential part of awakening, the spiritual awakening, the shift in consciousness on the planet. So I believe what Oprah and I did together, the web seminar last year was very significant because it was part of that shift in consciousness.

And sometimes people ask me, well, what's actually happening out there in this world? How do you know that there's a shift in consciousness happening because there's so many bad things happening? Well, one good thing happening was the recent election of Obama.

This is the difference in consciousness between Obama and his predecessor. It's just so striking. That is a real, real shift that has taken place.

I'm not saying he's the messiah. Not one person can change an entire country, but it's a very significant thing that happened there.

[Speaker 5] (3:53:27 - 3:53:36)

I was going to ask you about that, about what you thought about, I mean, we're looking for hope, and so you see hope in him.

[Speaker 1] (3:53:37 - 3:54:03)

Yes. Well, I'm not saying that the answers will come from him, but he is a manifestation of a change in consciousness. The fact that he got elected is a sign that there is a shift happening in the collective consciousness.

So he's not the answer. He's a manifestation of the answer. The true answer comes from within human beings collectively.

[Speaker 5] (3:54:04 - 3:54:17)

You know, there's an emotional thing about, I mean, reading a book, people so much hope that there is an answer in there, but they're also frightened that, you know, how can this one person have the answer? How can you have the answer?

[Speaker 1] (3:54:17 - 3:58:54)

Yes, it's not that this one person has the answer. It's just that a shift is happening collectively, and really the answer can only come through you. It comes from you, how you deal with the things, how you deal with daily existence, how you deal with the challenges, and not taking on board all the things necessarily that you hear in the media.

Everybody will tell you every day that the economic situation is terrible everywhere, and there's a lot of fear in people. They might lose their job. The investments are losing their value.

Many people are losing their jobs. So there are huge challenges coming, but this is also a great opportunity for human beings to wake up when they are being challenged. How do you respond to these challenges?

And I would say that your life is not determined by what happens to you, which is what people believe, but that means you're at the mercy of every little circumstance. Your life is really determined by how you react to what happens to you, and how you react or rather respond to what happens to you determines what happens next. So if your reaction is of a negative kind, if there's fear and anxiety or continuous mental complaining, this shouldn't be, but it is, then that's your state of consciousness, and then the next moment or the future reflects that state of consciousness.

But if you're able to work and live in alignment with the present moment rather than continuously being in a state of hostility towards what is, this is the present, this is where the present moment comes in the power of now, the importance of not making life which is the present moment. Really, that's all that life ever is, this moment, because where else do you find life except in this present moment? So that's a fundamental thing that first of all, you need to realize that life is now and never not now.

It's only this moment ever. Past and future only have a secondary reality. The past only exists if you remember it now.

The future only exists if you mentally project yourself into some future moment, but even that you can only do now. Your entire life unfolds in this space of now. You cannot think, feel, experience anything that is not now.

The people don't live like that. They live as if past and future, especially future for many people, were more important than the present moment. And they have a very strange relationship with the present moment, which means with life.

Many people, for many people, the present moment unconsciously is regarded as an obstacle because they're here, but they want to get there. So they, how do I get there? They're here.

They ignore this. How do I get there? So they're stressed.

They're continuously stressed because they're continuously trying to get away from now. Instead of fully giving your attention to what you need to do now, you project yourself to the next moment and you want to be there already. So you devalue this moment.

It's a dreadful way to live. So they're making, either they're making the now into an obstacle unconsciously. And then there's this prediction, if I get to the next one, then it'll be okay.

Or the next year, or when I achieve this or have that. But the same structure operates when they get there because it was still now and they want to be somewhere else. So that's a dysfunction, making the present moment into an obstacle or even worse, making the present moment into an enemy.

You treat this present. You don't like where you are. You don't like who you are with.

You don't like what you are doing. What an insane way to live. But it's, I could almost say it's normal for many people.

That's their normal reality. They don't like where they are. They don't like their surroundings.

They don't like their job. They don't like, the present moment becomes an enemy to them unconsciously.

[Speaker 5] (3:58:54 - 3:59:08)

What about people who have really, their present moment is they're in an abusive relationship or they're incarcerated or they're, you know, or they just found out they lost their job today and they have children to support.

[Speaker 1] (3:59:08 - 4:03:31)

I'm getting many letters from people in prison, for example, who have actually read *The Power of Now* or *A New Earth* and I've had letters from prison saying, I've realized I'm actually free. I'm still in prison, but inside I'm now free because I've learned not to resist internally the present moment. I can say, this is what is.

It's just this moment. Here I am sitting, I'm breathing. I'm looking, there's a little window.

I'm looking out of the window. I can see a little bit of sky, one person draw to me and I feel myself breathing and I feel the aliveness in the inner body. And this is, I've come to accept this moment, not accept that I have to be here for the next 20 years.

I just need to accept, become friendly with this moment, no matter how difficult it seems. Many years ago, I write about it in *The New Earth*. I was a graduate student in Cambridge and there was this man in a wheelchair and he couldn't move his limbs.

He had to be fed. I saw him every day at lunch. His head was slumped forward.

The food would fall out of his mouth when people fed him. One day, I opened the door for his wheelchair to come through and he was kind of, he looked at me with his blue clear eyes and at that moment, I saw he was not in suffering at all. So I realized at that moment, he had completely surrendered to what is, the isness of life, the isness of this moment.

And that was Stephen Hawkins. Later, I realized he wasn't world famous at that time. He was just well known in Cambridge.

Years later, I saw his image on the cover of a news magazine and said, oh, that's the man I saw every day in the restaurant in Cambridge and he was still in his wheelchair. He was supposed to die years earlier. He was still alive.

And when I looked into his eyes, I saw in this one of the worst things that could happen perhaps to a human being, to be totally paralyzed, only your mind is still working, but totally paralyzed, can't do anything for yourself anymore, can't even speak anymore. And he was, he lived in a state of acceptance and because he lived in that state of, which is not negative, it's a very positive state, just this is, just to say this moment is as it is. And then you can take action, but you're no longer resisting the isness of now because the isness already is as it is.

It is already the case. So you come from a state of openness towards life. And that's perhaps why his thinking became so creative because he said he was able to come from a state of openness to life instead of complaining.

It would have been very natural for a person like that to withdraw and to go into a state of deep negativity and feel sorry for yourself because the worst thing that could happen to a human being has happened to you. That would, the mind would be telling you that if you were listening to your mind. And I read this article then that I found in the magazine and there was a beautiful line in that article where he said about his life, who could have wished for more?

This person in the wheelchair, paralyzed, said about his life, who could have wished for

more? And so that means coming into alignment with the present moment, no matter what happens, even if it looks on the surface, it might look unacceptable, losing your job or even losing a loved one, whatever loss it is. But if you come into alignment, then out of that seemingly unacceptable situation, something good arises.

If you internally, you come into a state of yes to the isness of this moment, then even if it looks bad on the surface, there's always something hiding underneath it, underneath the seemingly bad. But you won't find that if you continuously resist. You have to come to a state of openness to life, to now.

[Speaker 5] (4:03:32 - 4:03:45)

Do these thoughts that you have are, often we see Christian references, we see references to Buddha. Is this a mix of different religions that you're looking at?

[Speaker 1] (4:03:45 - 4:05:13)

No, it's the one basic spiritual truth. And that one basic spiritual truth expresses itself in different forms in the different religions. So I'm going to the basic spiritual truth instead of taking things from different religions and mixing them up.

No, the different religions are just expressions of the one basic spiritual truth. And so I want to go to this, I'm going to the source of that and express it in a way that people can understand and realize in their own lives without having to subscribe mentally to this or that religion. Somebody who has no religion can understand this and experience it.

Or anybody who has, whether they are Christians or Buddhists or whether they subscribe to Islam or any belief, it doesn't matter because the basic truth is there if you look deep enough in all the religions. And so it's finding the core of spirituality that is there in all religions. Sometimes you can't see it very clearly because there's so much else on top of that, so many beliefs and so on.

So we go to the core of religion rather than treating religion as an ideology, which is what it often becomes.

[Speaker 5] (4:05:13 - 4:05:45)

You know, it's interesting when I'm hearing you talk, I think about, I mean, it's so helpful. But I think about when people often are very miserable and can't figure it out, they'll go to a therapist and they will start reviving their childhood and speaking very much to those things. So is that something that you would not recommend then?

Because much of that is going back and talking about the circumstances of your childhood and how your parents raised you and things like that. Is that destructive as opposed to helpful?

[Speaker 1] (4:05:46 - 4:07:40)

Sometimes understanding the past can be helpful, but delving into the past too much and trying to find some kind of ultimate answer in the past, I think is misleading because the answer has to come by going more deeply into the present moment rather than into the past. To become more present to what is, which includes, of course, your emotions, to become more conscious of what kind of emotions go through your body, what kind of thoughts go through your head. So becoming more aware, becoming more present in the now.

And if you do that, become more open to what is, then sometimes memories may suddenly come from the past and you may suddenly realize that a certain emotion that you experience frequently might have its root in the past, something that happened in childhood you might have forgotten. The answer is not in the past. The answer is in a state of aware presence in the moment, in the now.

So remembering the past can occasionally be helpful. It will come naturally as you become more present because if the past is still alive in you, it will manifest in one form or another in the present moment. That's the only place where it can manifest because that's all there is.

So if you're still carrying stuff from the past inside yourself, if you become more open to the present moment, more conscious of the present moment, then you will see that in the light of the present moment, in the light of the awareness. But you don't have to go there. It will reveal itself in the now, whatever is still concealed inside you.

[Speaker 5] (4:07:41 - 4:07:52)

It's funny, you know, we're talking about the now right now and yet somehow there is something about somebody's past that kind of unlocks something about who they are. I mean, I look at you and I just wonder what kind of a little boy you were.

[Speaker 1] (4:07:53 - 4:11:48)

Well, that might be interesting, but that cannot really tell you who I am. It might be interesting to... I don't remember very clearly.

I think I was basically unhappy most of my childhood because there was continuous conflict and my parents were continuously fighting. And basically, I was probably a sensitive child, so that affected me very strongly. And that perhaps then was the origin perhaps of my later depressions and anxiety.

That's all true. But even knowing that, it doesn't help me understand who I really am. Those are things that I can understand about myself.

I'd make the difference in a new earth about knowing yourself and knowing about yourself. So if you go to a psychiatrist or rather psychotherapist, you often learn more things about yourself, about your past, about your conditioning that you perhaps weren't aware of. And that's fine, learning things about yourself, but that still doesn't mean you know yourself.

So what does that mean when I say knowing yourself? Knowing about myself? Okay, it's knowing about my history and my past emotions and so on.

Knowing myself can only happen in the present moment. And that is knowing something within me that is timeless. And that timeless thing is what we mentioned at the beginning when we started our conversation here.

And that is not your thoughts or your emotions, but the space underneath your thoughts and emotions, the aware space, the present space, where there's simply an awareness, a knowing that is non-conceptual, just pure consciousness. Thoughts are consciousness that has taken some form, a thought form. Emotions are consciousness that has taken on the form of an emotion.

It comes and goes. Thoughts come and go, come and go, continuous flux. And underneath that, there is a conscious space of presence.

Jesus called that the light. You are the light. Jesus said of himself, I am the light.

Sometimes people forget that he also said, you are the light. You are the light of the world, he said. What does that mean?

The light in which everything appears, the light which makes all sense perception possible, the light which makes all thinking possible, the light which makes all feelings possible, which is consciousness. Without consciousness, there wouldn't be anything. There needs to be consciousness for something to be.

It comes into being through the conscious space. The Buddha called it emptiness. And this is the same as what Jesus calls the light.

There is an unconditioned, timeless dimension in yourself. Not some distant thing that you can find if you work very hard for the next 10 lifetimes. No, that is immediately accessible, but is actually simply covered up by a thin layer of thoughts and emotions.

It's kind of that covers up that. It's just a reorientation of the focus of your attention to take it there occasionally, find that dimension. It's right here, here now.

[Speaker 5] (4:11:49 - 4:12:19)

I have one last question because the fact your life is changing. I won't talk about what you're planning for the future, but how do you keep yourself in the now? And when your

influence, there's all this star power around you too.

There's many demands. There's more people wanting things from you. So how do you keep it from...

How do you keep your ego in check?

[Speaker 1] (4:12:20 - 4:14:48)

Well, ego, yes. Ego means to have some kind of concept in your head. Concept, of course, means thoughts.

Some concept in your head of who you are. So if then I begin to derive my identity from the concept in my head that I'm a very special person now, that means I've fallen back into ego and I no longer know who I am essentially because who I am is beyond any definition. Who you are is beyond any definition.

So if I got lost again in some mental concept, that means, okay, I've become, so to speak, unconscious again. So far, I don't think it has happened. I'm not identifying with any concept and I'm just staying with what is.

What is it that this moment requires me to do? And I look at that and I do that. It's fairly simple.

Just do what is at hand. Face, fully face the present moment. And then life remains simple.

If I project myself continuously forward, I think this afternoon I have to go there and tomorrow I have to give this big talk. I hope it's going to go well. What if it doesn't go well?

I would be dreadful. But if you just stay with what is needed now, of course, I can plan for the future by looking at my appointment book and see what I'm doing tomorrow. That's fine.

But I'm not projecting myself forward to tomorrow's talk and think, what if it doesn't go well? What if they don't like me? Or what if the words won't come?

Whatever the mind does, then things get difficult. So simply staying with just this, just this moment, then life remains simple. And not believing that you are this or that.

If people think you're special, as sometimes happens with people when they become famous or well known, then people project some kind of image. I mean, to Oprah, it happens on a huge scale, this projection. And so the challenge then is, yes, it is a challenge to remain not to take that on board and believe in the projections that other people have towards you.

Remaining simple, just not living through some concept of who you are, just being the presence, the awareness.

[Speaker 3] (4:14:50 - 4:14:59)

It now gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce the panel and, of course, His Holiness, the Dalai Lama.

[Speaker 4] (4:15:29 - 4:18:53)

So, good morning, everyone. And we have a wonderful creative challenge that is to have two panels of one hour in one hour. That means, I don't know if I'm correct, that one of the panel will have to travel half the speed of light to compensate for the time.

So we have to be very creative, that's for sure. So now our panel is about creativity and we will hear various aspects of creativity. And since I believe in Tibetan language, there is a word that refers to creativity that comes out of investigation in depth into one's mind, creative thinking.

But there are so many other aspects of creativity in science, in heart, in meditation, in neuroscience, in education, that perhaps His Holiness would like to ask our colleagues to express a few aspects of the Western aspect of creativity before calling upon you. So we have a wonderful array of participants. Professor Murray Gell-Mann received the Nobel Prize of Physics in 1969.

He works now at the Santa Fe Institute and is Emeritus Professor at the prestigious Caltech, the California Institute of Technology. And he's, among many other things, the one who discovered the squark. And so Dan Siegel is a therapist, an award-winning educator, director of the Mindsight Institute, and his forthcoming book is about Mindsight, how to develop insight and compassion.

Eckhart Tolle, as you know, in the former presentations, is a spiritual teacher, author of the wonderful book of The Power of Now and a New Earth. And it's quite remarkable that in such an individualistic society, millions of people have attempted not to identify to their ego, thanks to him. And the blue men, two of them here, also there are a few red and gray men along.

I think you have seen a good deal of what they were and what they represent, so I don't need to introduce them in detail, except that they have been performing throughout the states. But especially, they are now involved in education through the Blue Men Creativity Center and the Early Childhood Program in New York. Sir Ken Robinson is a worldwide leading educator in development of creativity, innovation.

He works with various governments and is professor of education at Warwick in UK. So he is, I think, for our panel. His honesty is a neat presentation.

So since we have to travel the speed of light, I think it's proper to begin with a Nobel Prize of Physics. And it is possible that Professor Gelman must also say a few words about rugby, by the way. So it's up to you.

[Speaker 9] (4:18:53 - 4:22:12)

Well, the great museum curator, Kirk Varnadoe, the late Kirk Varnadoe, was also an enthusiastic rugby player. And he compared modern art to the invention of the game of rugby, which happened one day in the early in the 19th century, when at rugby school, a soccer player picked up the ball and ran with it with a fine disregard for the rules, thereby founding the new game of rugby. And he pointed out that in modern art, you don't play by the rules, you play with the rules.

And that's an aspect of creative thinking. Often it happens that, well, let's say first, that in theoretical science, which is the kind of thing I've done most of my life, most of the challenges to scientific orthodoxy are not right. And many of them are crank.

But every once in a while, scientific orthodoxy is wrong on some subject. And one has to challenge it. And the conventions in such a case say that you mustn't think the following way.

It's bad. If you think that way, your papers won't be published, you won't get a job and so on and so forth. The only problem is that in the cases I'm talking about, thinking that way is actually right.

So you have to go up against that prohibition. And how do you get the idea of what to challenge? Well, it bubbles up from some hidden part of the human mind sometimes.

There are several stages to it. Everybody agrees in science and in art and in other fields as well. You have a problem, you have some contradiction between what's available and what you need.

And you ponder that contradiction and try to get out of it. And after a while, conscious further, conscious thought doesn't do any good. But somewhere out of sight in some deeper part of the human mind, this process, this search continues.

And one day while cooking or shaving or running or sometimes by a slip of the tongue, the correct answer may come to you. That happened to me once with a slip of the tongue. I was giving a lecture on why some idea wouldn't work.

And I made a mistake, slip of the tongue, and I had something that did work. So it's that same deeper part of the human mind that's presumably involved in the search for how to educate the heart. This search for forgiveness, compassion, is something that surely involves, at least occasionally, these parts of the human mind that are somewhat outside of conscious awareness.

So there is possibly a relation between creative thinking in art and science and in other fields on the one hand and the search for compassion, forgiveness, and so on, on the other.

[Speaker 4] (4:22:14 - 4:23:05)

So you spoke of compassion and education. Those are the two central themes of our gathering. So compassion, we need to be creative, even revolutionary about compassion.

If we think of the challenges of the modern times, the short term of the economy, the middle term of the quality of life, and the long term of the environment, those are seemingly incompatible, except if you have the thread of altruism, of consideration for others, that will prevent you from cheating others in economy, that will make you consider the quality of life of those you work with, and that will help you to consider the future generation. So in your work as a psychologist, as a therapist, how do you bring compassion in others' life and also in education?

[Speaker 7] (4:23:06 - 4:23:33)

Thank you. First of all, it's an honor to be here with all of my esteemed guests and with all of you and with your holiness. What I'd like to do creatively is I'm recovering from laryngitis, so I'm very aware of my internal impulse to cough.

So I will say very slowly the things on my mind, but it very much relates to the theme of what you're asking, Matthieu, about...

[Speaker 4] (4:23:33 - 4:23:36)

By the way, the doctor told Dan, don't speak the whole week.

[Speaker 7] (4:23:37 - 4:28:39)

Yes, I said right, you know. So here's what I'd like to just present as take-home thoughts about that. That compassion and creativity are healthy for the brain.

And that in education, we have focused on the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, which set up a pattern for the brain to learn things in a very fixed way. And we give those skills in modern education in most schools, maybe not the blue school, but in most schools. Now, what I'd like to propose is that there are three other basic R's of reflection, where we look inward and realize that without an active effort to train the mind, then the brain, as it gets past seven or eight years of age, begins to get fixed in its way of seeing things.

As Eckhart has taught us with the power of now, it starts to believe that the thoughts are the identity of the person. And as that happens, the brain has a natural tendency to

imprison us in this false belief that our thoughts and our feelings are the total of our identity. And in many ways, creativity is imprisoned as well, because one way...

Oh, one way... The last time I spoke with His Holiness, we were told, when the translator begins to speak, you stop. And the clock keeps on turning.

Because otherwise, it's not fair to him. He can't follow the next thing you're saying. Okay.

So anyway, so the idea here is that creativity emerges from novelty. And it is exactly as Dr. Gelman was saying. It was scientific orthodoxy that the brain didn't change after childhood.

But now we know that certain factors, beyond just exercise, help us keep on growing our brains. And that includes novelty. So we realize that creativity is really a part of creating novelty for the brain.

It's about keeping the brain growing, not just in childhood, but throughout the lifespan. So reflection allows you to go inward and get beyond the fixed ways of thinking. That's the first thing.

But then I want to talk about relationships, because this is the first moment I've been able to actually address His Holiness directly since in April of last year. You asked us a question. We were on a panel together at the Seeds of Compassion meeting.

And you challenged us as four scientists. Richie Davidson was one of them, Andy Meltzoff, Alicia Lieberman, and myself. You challenged us in a very provocative way, saying that you in religion have not been so effective, whether it was theistic religion or non-theistic religion, to make the world a kinder and more compassionate place.

And you suggested that in science, we should look for a secular ethic that could promote compassion. So ever since we had that communication, I have not stopped thinking about that. And it's challenged my fixed ways of thinking as a scientist and as a physician.

And this addresses your question, Matthew, to now give you a response. And it's a question for you, Your Holiness. One thing that emerged was the idea that if we start seeing compassion and creativity as forms of brain health or brain hygiene, then perhaps we can introduce to education and then make it a standard practice in all societies, a practice of brushing your brain every day, just like we brush our teeth.

So that we would have a form of, for example, everyone knows you brush your teeth every day, not once a month, not once a year. But if we had a form of mind training that was about reflection, it would promote the compassion circuits of the brain. It would liberate creativity.

It would keep the brain young. And in many ways, it would develop another ours. We have reflection and relationships like the one I started with you when you encouraged us to think about that.

You'd have resilience. So in all these ways, we can promote creativity and compassion in the world. They go hand in hand by promoting a kind of training that allows us to look inward and liberates us from the way the brain falsely creates identity and keeps us seeing things through very narrow lenses when we can open them wide and feel the freedom of seeing life as it really is and connecting with others in a deep, compassionate and kind way.

[Speaker 4] (4:28:50 - 4:29:13)

So, Your Holiness, you often express views about what will be required in modern education to really bring out good human beings. So could you share a few thoughts with us about that subject since education is one of the main topics of our gathering? Yeah, the creativity, actually.

[Speaker 2] (4:29:19 - 4:30:22)

It seems to me the creativity that I think is more related to more intelligence. Although I think other species of mammals also have some degree, certain degree of creativity but compared with human beings, much, much less. Why?

Intelligence. So I think the main factor, creativity, that's something to create new thing, new thing, new thing. So that's, I think, mainly related with intelligence.

Compassion, mainly related with, I don't know, Tibetan word, dumbedikthi.

[Speaker 8] (4:30:23 - 4:30:33)

It's, qualities related with the heart but they tend to express themselves more in the form of a wish and intent.

[Speaker 2] (4:30:35 - 4:34:43)

Then creativity, we have, what should I say, by nature, because of this brain and the potential of creativity is there but then I think for creativity, I think it is necessary some kind provoke. So sometimes, you see, the life easy, no problem, then maybe creativity also may remain asleep or rest. Yes, more challenge.

More difficulties. Then, you see, our intelligence become much more, And also I think, so I think the factor to bring creativity, one, challenge. Another, experience, past experience.

Then also I think another sort of factor for creativity may be contradictory. If there's no

contradictions, then creativity may not develop. So contradictory for forces, external matter or mental level, they are contradictory.

If you look, if you remain just like that, contradictory, contradiction. So then, then the creativity responds for that, then try to synthesize these things. So that may be, I don't know, my knowledge is very limited.

I don't know. Then compassion, compassion, as I mentioned earlier, wish. But the relation with creativity I think different way, not direct, indirectly.

That means I feel compassion, or then also I feel creativity, there also can be one realistic creativity, one unrealistic creativity also there. I think in most cases, unrealistic sort of thing is usually destructive. Realistic may be, generally speaking, more positive.

Positive means in the sense, anything which you want, even you want to harm other, the method should be realistic, then more effective. So therefore, in order to develop realistic sort of approach, we have to know the reality fully. In order to know the reality fully, objective attitude is very essential.

For that reason, calm mind is important. There compassion works. Compassion open our mind and then how my mental state remain calm and with that kind of mental state, you can see the reality more clearly.

Too much emotion, then you can't see the reality. So that way, maybe some connection. But otherwise, these two things are creativity, mainly with intelligence and compassion, mainly with the warm heart.

So I think two separate things.

[Speaker 4] (4:34:44 - 4:35:26)

I don't know. So if constructive creativity has to be attuned to reality, that means the mind should stop distorting reality. We should bridge the gap between the way things appear and the way things are.

That means in a way, the mind has to remain in its natural state and sort of perturbed state. So I think, Eckhart, maybe you could tell us a few things of how creativity could arise from a mind that is not completely distorted by mental constructions.

[Speaker 1] (4:35:32 - 4:42:11)

We started off by talking about the genesis of rugby and when I heard that, something just came to mind, a news item that I listened to a few days ago on my and His Holiness' favorite news channel, which is the BBC World News that I listen to every day. And I believe you also listen to that. There was a news item on the BBC about soccer, football, soccer is the name.

And researchers had looked at a phenomenon in soccer that is called, I believe, the penalty shootout. So I haven't watched a soccer game in about 20 years, so I only have a vague recollection of what that means. It's often the decisive moment in a game when one player is selected to try to kick this ball into the goal, and there must be better expressions for it, to score.

And there's an enormous pressure at that moment on this player. Everything depends on it. His whole nation sometimes is watching.

And so it's of incredible importance, not on a cosmic scale, but on a relative scale. And so the researchers examined what happens when the referee whistles, and then that is a signal for the player to shoot. And those players who do not pause, who immediately shoot after they hear the whistle, are much less likely to score than those players who, when the whistle goes, they don't immediately shoot.

There's three, four, five seconds, even more when they become still. And then it happens, and the likelihood of scoring is infinitely greater than those players who do not stop. So this, when you ask for an explanation, well, people will give some kind of mental verbal explanation, say, well, they concentrate.

That gives them a moment of concentration. But what does that mean when we say they concentrate for a moment? The question I'd like to ask is what happens in that moment of going within?

So the attention, which usually would be on the desired outcome and the pressure, the attention on the self, me, I have to perform, that the attention is taken away from all that. And there is a redirecting of attention into the depths. And so at that moment, I believe, because I'm familiar with that process, I believe it is the basis of the creative process.

And in soccer, it is a rudimentary expression of the creative process. A redirecting of attention within where you touch a deeper layer, a deeper level of your being. And that is the, where all power resides.

And when you touch that power, at that moment, the whole, all conceptual things, including the concept of me, conceptual self goes. There's simply a deep, intensely alive stillness. And out of that stillness comes the power.

And that power is not my power or your power. It is universal power. And that power then can either become a masterful kick of the ball, or it can flow into other channels and it can become, be born into form.

It could be a mental, I believe that also scientists, after they've done a lot of thinking, as you mentioned, there's a moment of cessation of thinking. And often in that moment of stillness, and stillness is not just the absence of thinking. There is a power in the

stillness.

There is non-conceptual intelligence in the stillness. Intelligence, when we measure intelligence with IQ tests, all we measure is conceptual intelligence. But there is a vaster, much vaster intelligence in every human being that is non-conceptual, not words and concepts.

You can't analyze it. But everybody has that within, potentially. And I believe that is the source of creativity.

Now, this does not mean that when I am asked to kick this ball and score a goal, I go deeply within and it's going to happen. Now, why doesn't it happen? I've gone deeply within.

I've contacted the source of power. It's not working. Or if they ask me to come up with a great theory of physics, okay, I'm going to become still and then perhaps the theory of relativity or something or the unified field theory or the answer to everything is going to come to me.

It's not because I don't know anything about physics. So it can only come, there must be a vehicle that is ready for the power to flow into. The vehicle could be the human mind.

There must be something that has already been prepared for that in the world of form. So, and this is why some researchers have found, I read it recently in a book called Outliers, that to achieve proficiency and become masterful at something, one prerequisite is, they called it 10,000 hours of practice. And so 10,000 hours of practice, then the possibility arises that the vehicle is ready to be receptive to the power of creativity.

[Speaker 4] (4:42:23 - 4:42:49)

Education. The wish of all parents is that education will help them to provide for their children to become good human beings, to have confidence in life and to have happiness. Well, it seems that education does almost everything except that.

Boosting intelligence and a bunch of information. So how do you solve that?

[Speaker 6] (4:42:49 - 4:49:39)

In five minutes, of course. I'm trying to shake off this image of Eckhart on a football pitch. I really started something.

Yeah, you did, sir. I take it all back. And the referee blows the whistle and Eckhart waits 10 seconds for 10,000 hours.

And he still misses. Well, you see, I wanted just to pick up on something the Dalai Lama

said. And actually, that's something I've always wanted to say.

Which is that this power of creativity is unique to human beings. There's a prior power, which is the power of imagination, which is really where this comes from, which is the ability to bring to mind things that aren't present. I mean, if you take a small child into the garden, if you have one, and point at the moon, the child will look at the moon.

If you take a dog into the garden and point at the moon, the dog will look at your finger and wonder what your problem is exactly. No, we are born with the capacity to project ourselves into other places, to imagine forwards and backwards, to conceive of a past, to conceive of a future. And not just one future, but many futures.

Not just one past, but many pasts. Eckhart's work is about dwelling in the present. But it's not only about that.

It's recognizing the real power comes from recognizing there is only this present moment. The problem, I think, is that that power has to be cultivated, creativity is a step on, because you could be imaginative all day long and never do anything. To be creative, you have to do something.

And it's a very practical process. It's putting your imagination to work. It's, so to speak, applied imagination.

And it depends on skills. It depends on training. It depends on confidence.

And it depends on knowing things, as you said. And often in education, I think a mistake is made in believing that you just have to allow people to be creative. Actually, you have to help people to be creative.

You have to teach them. It's like saying, we hope you will all be literate. And good luck with that.

Here are the keys to the library. Callers. You know, you need to be helped and facilitated, as with all processes.

You need teaching and mentoring for it to happen. And this is why I believe we have such a big problem right now, which is that all children are born with immense creative potential, much more than their dogs. And, I mean, other animals may have something like imagination and creativity, but they show no signs of it in the way that we do.

Look at the building we're in. Look at the conversation we're having. I mean, other animals may feel elated, but they don't write poetry.

You know, they may get depressed, but they don't listen to Miles Davis and drink Jack Daniels. You know. We do.

And the problem is that these capacities, like literacy, need to be cultivated. And it's essential, they do, for our humanity. And it's essential because of the sort of futures that we face.

These are the powers that will deliver us into the future, or, I think, make us stumble in the face of it. And current systems of education do the exact opposite. Our current systems of education are rooted in the idea that education is really about learning facts and information, primarily.

Propositional knowledge, which is important. But there's no space for people to develop their real creative capacities. It's not the fault of teachers, I don't think.

But we have education systems which were rooted in the principles and ideals of industrialism. They were designed to do particular things, and they're based on standardization. And so far from encouraging creativity, the whole emphasis is on knowing certain things and getting them right.

And there's one answer, and it's at the back. And don't look. You know, because that's cheating.

And don't talk to anybody else, because that's cheating too. I mean, outside of schools, that's called collaboration. But inside schools...

And I think this is a fundamental issue of human rights. It's an issue of economic development. It's an issue of the cohesion of our communities.

And it means we have to look hard at the curriculum. In most schools, for example, the arts, which are not the only source of creative thinking. Science is hugely creative.

You can be creative at anything. But some people think in the way the arts facilitate. And if that's the way they think, this is a tough world for them now, because they get cut out.

And assessment is really now focused entirely on the process of standardization. And education has become depersonalized. And the only way to revive it is to personalize it.

I don't think there's a kid in Vancouver who gets out of bed in the morning wondering what he or she can do to raise the province's reading standards. You know, they, you know, call me. I'm at your disposal.

You know, they will read if they're encouraged and engaged to read. So somewhere along this process of industrial education, we've lost sight of the heart of education, which is the minds and hopes and aspirations of the students who pass through it. And we have to revive that if we're to not just save education, but help our children prosper.

And I think that's what's so compelling about the work of the Blue School. And it's what's so compelling about what we've heard here about compassion. Creativity is one of a

nexus of ideas which will deliver us a more humane education that we don't just need, but our children are yearning for.

[Speaker 9] (4:49:40 - 4:50:46)

So, could I add a word to those wonderful remarks of Sir Ken Robinson? An education professor once remarked on the fact that creative thinking enters far more into problem formulation than it does into problem solving. Problem formulation is often by far the trickier part.

And school, he remarked, this education professor remarked, school is almost the only place where the problems are all formulated for you. How do you learn problem formulation in a conventional school? It's, that's the place where creative thinking really comes in.

And we need far more exercises in that than merely in problem solving. Yes.

[Speaker 4] (4:50:53 - 4:51:08)

So, Matt and Chris, we have seen your performance. We have heard you explaining what you mean by creativity, but for the sake of this panel, how would you bring precisely what is missing in education to your work?

[Speaker 13] (4:51:11 - 4:54:23)

Well, first I want to say that sometimes we used to say that when we first got bald and blue, and if we thought we were going to make a living from that, they would have put us in a padded room and thrown away the key. And as I sit here with His Holiness and some of the greatest minds on the planet, I'm so humbled. But I would say if we had, when we first got bald and blue, said we were going to make a living and be sitting here, they'd throw away the key, melt it down, grind it up in a blender.

But, you know, our job, I feel, is now to translate all of what you said about creativity and the process and the workings of the mind into the classroom and apply it to the actual education of the children. Eckhart, you said something very, just came home for us the other day in one of the sessions about teaching awareness. And so that's something that we're very much trying to do with the help of Dr. Daniel Segal, with the help of Sir Ken Robinson, who sits on our Board of Advisors. Maybe we could all be on the Board of Advisors, if you don't mind, after this session, we'll talk. But this awareness, first of all, we feel like creativity has to be sewn into every single part of the educational process. We feel like social and emotional learning, not a separate subject, but part of everything, so that the skills of empathy, the skills of compassion, are all sewn into your literacy and your math and your social studies as strongly as anything.

And that's how teaching to the whole child, you know, might happen. And so, you know,

it's not the easiest task, truly, to take even these 10 minutes each of this incredibly profound and intelligent thinking and make it happen in the classroom. But through teaching children how their own minds work, awareness to their own process, awareness to creativity, awareness to how they treat themselves, how they think of others, we're hoping that these children will come out with these special skills that we're going to need to build a harmonious and sustainable world, which is what the mission of the Blue School is.

So that's our hope.

[Speaker 15] (4:54:30 - 4:54:35)

Since we're talking about compassion, I just want to add that the iPhone that we blended was a prop.

[Speaker 4] (4:54:43 - 4:55:40)

So there are 16,000 young children who will hear His Holiness in one hour time. And this is very, very valuable. We're all speaking of education.

That's what His Holiness will do, inspire them. And we have to give place to the next panel. So again, relativity, getting at the speed of light.

So as a conclusion, His Holiness, you often speak of intelligence and information in education as being tools. A hammer can build a house and can destroy it. So you've always been stressing to introduce more human values in the education.

So could you, as a concluding thought, remind us of what are your views on what's missing in modern education and what can be added to modern education?

[Speaker 2] (4:55:44 - 5:05:46)

Now we are in 21st century. We have, I think, quite clear memory what happened in 20th century. The other day you mentioned the 20th century.

There have been 200 to 300 millions of people killed during that century. So usually I describe 20th century become like century of bloodshed, century of war, violence. If through this act of violence really, truly solve many problem permanently, then maybe some justification, but that not.

Still a lot of problems. And then, firstly, nobody want die, kill. War means kill, eliminate.

So everybody, even I think the plants also have to survive. I think human nature in springtime everything grow new life. So we feel happy.

Autumn leaves fall down and these things, trees become then something like naked or

like that. So we compare springtime, I think less. So that's, I think, the indication of our basic sort of nature.

We want fresh survival, growth. So since 20th century become like the century of war, bloodshed and a lot of problem, not only suffering, but a lot of problems. This is created.

So therefore, now this 21st century should be century of peace, peaceful century. Peace does not mean doing nothing, peace, no. So long human being who have a lot of intelligence remain there, some form of problem bound to happen.

Different views, different ideas, different sort of interest always there. So these are the source of conflict. So therefore, I think so long the concept of we and they there, some problems always there.

So therefore, take for granted problem will be there. Now in order to be this century more century of peace, now we have to find ways and means to solve these problem through nonviolent way. So that's the dialogue.

In order to carry meaningful dialogue, you must respect other's right, other's view. Then for mutual benefit, then dialogue or compromise. Now all these things, of course, intelligence also important role here, but mainly on heartiness.

Or compassion, respect other. As just like myself, they also have the right to achieve their sort of happiness or their goal. So now in order to bring this century, century of peace, peaceful, ultimately peace very much with not intelligence, but here on heartiness.

So therefore, present our education system and our whole habit, I think as humans, I think very rightly, we, I think in the past, I think last few centuries, I think we really put all our hope on material values. Material development can solve all problem. But this is not the case.

I noticed this is a affluent society. The material facility, very good, plenty. But still inward, too much stress.

Our society or too much creativity also brings what's in the competition, competitive sort of feeling, isn't it? And you say, oh, sometimes I think ruthless competition, that's bad, isn't it? I think positive competition is good.

So in any way, this modern society where all the facilities there, but mental level, too much stress, too much worry. And ruthless sort of competition brings suspicion, distrust. So even within one family, distrust.

First, I think for certain time, very happy. Then eventually distrust. Both sides, too much self-centered attitude, then difficult, isn't it?

So family problems, individual problem. Nowadays, I think, for example, Japan, I was told among student, young student, there are many cases of depression, cases of loneliness increasing, suicide also increasing. So the material level, very good.

But these things, I think these cases and this event shows us material value alone, there's limitation. Logically, we have physical, the material value provide physical comfort, not mental comfort. So now modern education seems to see very much stress on the focusing, focusing the material sort of values of development.

So I think, I feel in ancient time about, oh, of course, I'm not expert. But I just, you see, they heard from someone from here, from here, from here, from here. That's my way of education.

Not reading, not serious sort of study, like that. So therefore, I heard about 1,000 years ago, this separate education institution started. At that time, moral sort of, moral education, take, I mean, responsibility, taking care of moral ethics, church.

So at that time, maybe sufficient. Moral ethics, church, look after. Brain development, newly developed institution, carry, you see, their responsibility.

So now time passes, the influence of church reduce, decline. The family values also decline. Then, you see, nobody take care about moral principles.

Now education institution alone have both responsibility, taking care of brain, taking care of warm-heartedness. So we need, I feel, and also some, my friend, you see, they fully agree, fully can share really we need more sort of research work, more study. Now everybody knows now something lacking in education field.

So education is the key factor to bring happier human society, happier world. So there are something lacking. So that, I think we need specialists like you and you, these people, you see, more study, more research work, and then make concrete sort of ideas or proposals.

Several times in Europe or in America, many cases, in India also, I expressed these things. But at the moment, you see, people agree, fully agree, but nothing happened. So now I'm hoping, now time is running out.

So it's some concrete sort of proposal or sort of ideas should come. Should not expect from me, no, I don't know anything. So you see, those educated people, those professors, I think now I'm going to speak to those young people.

So these young people are the real people of this century. We here belongs to the 20th century. Now we are ready to say goodbye.

So before our final goodbye say, we must show some right sort of guide to the next

generation.

[Speaker 4] (5:06:00 - 5:06:08)

So this is a perfect position for the next panel. We will give a place to them. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (5:06:44 - 5:08:41)

What a wonderful session, Your Holiness. You have really challenged us. And we have just a few minutes waiting for our panel to get their microphones on, because there weren't enough.

You see, we have to change. So I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you a story of another Peace Laureate. You know, the last few days we've had the luxury and the benefit of having so wonderful, so many wonderful Nobel Peace Laureates with us for this Peace Summit, starting with yourself.

But I wanted to share with you another story of a Peace Laureate who's Canadian. Canadian Peace Laureate who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957, a former Prime Minister of Canada, Lester Pearson. And when he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize over 50 years ago, he challenged the world by saying that we needed to seek peace in the world and that it was a task we were doing badly.

And here's a quote, and I have to get it right. But he said at that point, the grim fact is that we prepare for war like precocious giants and for peace like retarded pygmies.

[Speaker 1] (5:08:41 - 5:08:42)

Like a giant.

[Speaker 3] (5:08:44 - 5:14:10)

Now, we have to forgive him for maybe what we would see today as being politically incorrect. But his words today, I believe, are as relevant as they were 50 years ago. Why is it, why is it, Your Holiness, that we spend billions of dollars and huge resources to prepare for war and spend so few dollars and so few resources and so few, so little energy in our education, our research, our inquiry in preparing for peace?

If you think about science and the use of science, whether it's quantum mechanics or nuclear physics and the building of weaponry and satellite technology, and I'm all for science, believe me. But where are the arts and the humanities and the understanding that needs to be developed to allow us to know what it means to be compassionate, how to be kind, how to be empathetic? I believe there's a science there, and I think you do too.

And I know our panel this morning is going to take up from the 2006 meeting on

Educating the Heart where you challenged us just as you did this last panel. You said, we now know why we must do it. We have to get on with how we're going to do it.

And I hope today's panel will help us answer the how. So I'd like to introduce our panel. So we're so pleased, Your Holiness, to have five incredible intellectual experts with us this morning.

And I'm going to give a very brief introduction because I know our audience has already read the precis in the bulletin, but I would like to welcome to my right Stephen Covey. Stephen is recognized as one of Time Magazine's 25 most influential Americans and is a respected leader, authority, family expert and author, having written The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. Next to Stephen is Adele Diamond.

Adele is one of the founders of the field of Development Cognitive Neuroscience and holds the Canada Research Chair Professorship in that field at the University of British Columbia. We're honored to have to my left Mayreid Maguire. Mayreid is a co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1976.

She was responsible for co-founding the Peace People Northern Ireland that resulted in a number of marches demanding an end to the violence in Northern Ireland. Clyde Hertzman. Clyde is Director of the Human Early Learning Partnership or HELP at UBC and holds the Canada Research Chair in Population Health and Human Development.

And Kimberly Schoenreichel. Kim is a former teacher for troubled children and youth and is now a professor in education at UBC. She spent the majority of her academic career conducting research aimed at understanding the ways in which children's empathy and compassion can be cultivated in schools.

So perhaps I'd like to start, Your Holiness, in asking you what role you think education might play in helping us prepare for peace.

[Speaker 2] (5:14:17 - 5:22:42)

Then I'm going to repeat what I already said. Obviously, you see, violence and wars, I think from the beginning of human history is part of our history, part of human life. A former president of India, Abdul Kalam, a Muslim, great scientist, he often used to say the seed of problem is the concept of I and me.

So, therefore, this violence actually has become the idea we and they, this big sort of demarcation. Then the destruction, destroy of your enemy or them, the victory of we. So that, I think several thousand years, that concept of India.

Now, firstly, of course, the violence very much related with that. That's the basis to create violence. And secondly, today's world, today's reality, no longer that vision, we and they.

Economy reasons, global economy reasons, and also environment reasons, and simply the sheer sort of human population. So unless we work together, the future of humanity difficult. So therefore, if you think today's reality, then war is outdated.

Others' problem is our problem. Our problem, also their problem. So, six billion human beings must work together with sense of we or us.

So that's now the new, according to new reality, we need that kind of sort of concept. So how to bring that? Two things.

Compassion. Compassion, there are two levels. One level, compassion.

Of course, these things I already mentioned last few days. But then I think here, some more people, new people may be here. So therefore, may not be harmful to repeat these things.

So it's two levels. Two levels of compassion. One level is more biological factor.

That compassion, no need training. No need help of wisdom. Spontaneous, like compassion from mother to their children, or compassion or sense of concern of your relatives.

At least those relatives, you see, show you positive attitude. Even those relatives, you see, the negative attitude, forget. Even you see, instead of the sense of concern of well-being, even you should wish more trouble for them, like that.

So these are biological factor, and very much oriented about others' attitude. Now, second level of compassion is now beyond that, not oriented to the others' attitude. Disregard others' attitude.

But still, they are human being. And furthermore, they are sentient being. Why we love ourselves?

Not the reason we're kind to ourselves, no. But simply, I want happiness. I do not want suffering.

Because of that, they say, I have the right to overcome suffering. So that logical process, the other, rest of six million human beings, all have same. All do not want suffering, want happiness.

So they also deserve, you see, because of that, to achieve happiness. And they're passing through difficulties. We must respond, sense of concern for them.

So that is genuine compassion, second level compassion. That compassion, not sort of biased, not oriented attitude, but oriented being itself, to the person or to the sentient being. So that, unbiased.

That kind of compassion, through training, through reasoning, as I mentioned earlier, today's reality. My future depends on them. So I have to take their interest.

Ultimately, for my own interest. So that's it. So, education now, very, very important role in that field.

Educate people. Now, what happened in the past century, 20th century, become century of bloodshed, century of war. What happened?

And spend a lot of money. Anyway, now nuclear weapon, you see, even just keeping this nuclear weapon, a lot of money required. At the same time, nobody dare to use this weapon.

So waste of time. Waste of money, isn't it? If you really love nuclear weapon, then you should use.

If you use nuclear weapon, doesn't matter. Senseless, right? Madness and senseless.

So therefore, as I was thinking this line, then, now time come, we have to get vision. The demilitarized world. And one time, one German professor expressed, now world become something like one body.

So each government, no need foreign ministry and defense ministry. You should treat your neighbor as a sort of domestic, sort of part of yourself. I think that's very good.

So the very idea, foreign ministry, dealing with foreigner, something different. They, and defense, protect yourself, because they may attack you. So this very concept is, I think, out-of-digit concept, like that.

So these things, through education, through awareness.

[Speaker 3] (5:22:44 - 5:23:25)

Thank you. Wonderful entree. Want to turn to my education experts here, Clyde and Kim, and ask them, first Clyde, what role do the schools have in educating the heart?

And can you give us some examples of things that might be happening? And then, Kim, kind of, what's your experience been here in Vancouver and across the province and throughout the world? And what can we help in terms of guiding and moving this agenda of educating the heart forward?

[Speaker 15] (5:23:26 - 5:26:18)

Well, Your Holiness, since you were here the last time, you challenged us to stop talking and start acting. And so, over the last few years, we've been trying to mobilize the schools in British Columbia to focus on social and emotional learning and to take

seriously educating the human heart. One of the ways that we've been trying to do that is to get the whole education system to recognize that educating the human heart means starting right at the very beginning of life.

Because as children develop vision, as they develop hearing and touch and speech, particularly the sensory parts of those, develop connections with the deep, deep structures in the brain that have got to do with whether or not we feel like we belong or whether or not we feel threatened. And so the children who grow up in environments which are threatening, where they see lots of angry faces, where they deal with lots of this kind of touch rather than that kind of touch, and when they're shouted at and so forth, by the time they reach school age, their brains are actually different from children who have grown up in strong, emotionally accepting environments such that they sense threat where others don't. They see threat where others don't. And that means that there are huge barriers to them becoming compassionate citizens of the sort that you just described.

So one of the things that we've done over the last few years is we've worked with all of the kindergarten teachers in this province. So we're talking about several thousand kindergarten teachers when children are at age five, getting them to look at the state of children's development. Are they physically aggressive?

Are they empathic and helpful and so forth? And provide that information so that we can actually map out the contours of early social and emotional development for all of the neighborhoods in the province. And we've done this once, twice, three times.

So we are the first jurisdiction in the world that has thoroughly mapped the state of early social and emotional development. And what we've discovered is that in some neighborhoods in the province, only two or three or five percent of the children have a worrisome state of emotional development by the time they reach school age. But in other areas, it's 25 or 30 percent.

And it's totally avoidable. And so we are working now in the preschool period with the family strengthening programs and the criteria for quality child care to get those things embedded early. And then working with people like Kim to transition into schools and mainstream these kind of ideas.

[Speaker 3] (5:26:18 - 5:26:29)

So Kim, how does that transition take place? And what's happening after the children reach school and the types of experiences that you think might make a difference?

[Speaker 17] (5:26:29 - 5:28:02)

Well, Your Holiness, it's an honor to be here again with you to talk about education of the heart. And one of the things that Clyde talked about is that there could be children who

come into school with problems. But we don't want to give up hope and say, well, forget it, they've come kind of damaged.

What we know is that schools, as you have said, education can play a powerful role. And one thing in British Columbia in which we're very lucky is that the promotion of social and emotional learning is prominent, is part of the goal of education. So in 2001, social responsibility is one of the four goals of education in British Columbia, in addition to reading, writing and math.

And the parts of social responsibility that schools promote includes things like contributing to classroom and school community, solving problems in peaceful ways, practicing democratic rights and responsibilities, and valuing diversity and defending human rights. So one thing that has been very easy for us to do in your last challenge to us when you, I think you told us just get to work now in 2006 and start doing things, that a lot has happened here. There are many initiatives across the province which really are focusing on educating the hearts of children and programs that bring in mindful attention awareness, programs for teachers, even a teacher training program now for pre-service teacher education programs to help them learn the strategies to educate the heart of children.

[Speaker 2] (5:28:12 - 5:28:36)

I want to know, as a result of the practice of these sort of education for heart, these things, in the result level, what differences those students who have that kind of education, that program, and those students who pass through that kind of education, what differences?

[Speaker 17] (5:28:41 - 5:29:01)

Well, we basically have been doing a lot of research. As you know, science is very important and we are finding differences in terms of children who receive these programs develop empathy, altruism, compassion, and even do better in school. So, we know there's a lot of things that happen by educating the heart and educating the mind together.

[Speaker 2] (5:29:02 - 5:29:02)

Wonderful.

[Speaker 3] (5:29:10 - 5:29:30)

Another form of education, which is families and the role families might play. And I know, Stephen, you are an expert on that and maybe you could share with us some of the things that you think the role of the family, the type of education and learning that takes place there in terms of educating the heart.

[Speaker 8] (5:29:31 - 5:34:28)

Well, I think that the family is the most fundamental and most important organization in the world. And that's where most of the real fundamental education takes place. So, I suggest we have a family of nine.

Sandra and I have a family of nine children and 51 grandchildren. But if you were to ask me what one thing has made the huge difference, it's the development of a family mission statement. And we put it literally on everyone's wrist or they put it on their ankle.

And a family mission statement basically, we serve God by serving others. So it gets them into the ethic of service and into the character development of subordinating themselves, me to the idea of we, what the Dalai Lama just talked about. So that you move from independence to interdependence and a high level of collaboration.

So to me, that has been the most significant one single thing that we have done. The second thing is very practical. I finished training Indian chiefs that run Indian nations in North America.

That's in Mexico, the United States and Canada, including First Nations. And after three days of training, they gave to me a special gift. It was called an Indian talking stick.

It was about this high. They put my name on the backside. They called me Bald Eagle.

Even though I did a lot of special blow drying that morning for extra body. Anyway, the idea is very, very simple. And this was taught by the Iroquois Federation to the founding fathers of the United States.

The idea is that you always give it first to the other person. And I cannot say anything until you feel understood, which stirs up empathy, empathic listening, so that you get inside your frame of reference, into your mind and into your heart. Did I really understand not only what you said, but how you feel about what you said?

And I can't say anything until I have done this. Then you pass it back to me. Now it's my turn to express how I see it and how I feel about it.

As this goes back and forth between us, creativity is unleashed. And you come up with third alternative solutions. Not my way, not your way, and not a compromise, but a new way that we have created together.

And that automatically begins to develop the spirit of interdependency and collaboration and cooperation and profound respect for other people. And so I teach this wherever I go. This is another form of an Indian talking stick.

You could use a pencil, you could use a piece of paper. The object is valuable simply

because you do not get it back and cannot express yourself until that person gives it to you, meaning I feel understood. And both levels of compassion that the Dalai Lama just talked about are developed in this way.

Through empathic listening and trying to understand deeply what a person says and what they feel about what they say. So we focus a great deal on both developing a mission statement that we all participate in creating. It took us eight months to create this one.

We serve God by serving others. And the basic approach that we use to develop this is the Indian talking stick communication.

[Speaker 3] (5:34:29 - 5:35:58)

Maybe I could ask you, Stephen, to hand the talking stick to Adele. I'm absolutely certain that we get Adele and May Reid in this conversation because His Holiness is going to have to leave us very shortly to go and educate the hearts of 16,000 young people in a WE conference. So I want to be absolutely certain that we get both of our other speakers to share with us.

And I want to change the focus a little bit to the individual. And how does the individual learn without necessarily going to school or counting on their family? And Adele, you once said that you thought that people who are the happiest are those who make others happy.

And I'm wondering if you could share with us some of your ideas about how individuals can achieve that. And then to ask May Reid kind of the same question in terms of what you found through your experiences. How do you draw upon yourself to become compassionate?

What do you seek, not from others, but internally? How do you learn internally how to be compassionate and to be joyful and to live in the moment?

[Speaker 14] (5:35:59 - 5:39:05)

So talking stick moving back and forth. Your Holiness, you'll remember from Dharamsala that I'm very interested in practical, in moving beyond words. And if we want to educate the heart of children, we need to start with us, with you and I, because children learn what they live.

It's very nice to tell them things in school, but what they learn are from the examples of the people around them. So we need to start with us. And it doesn't have to be big things.

It could be when you leave today, you let another car merge in front of you. Or it could

be just saying thank you to somebody in the store who was serving you or the people cleaning your office. There are any number of things you can do, little things you can do that teach you, help you and help the child.

Now, your Holiness has said, if you want others to be happy, show them compassion. If you want yourself to be happy, show others compassion. And there's profound wisdom in that, but you often don't realize it unless you experience it.

Because before you experience it, you often think it's a zero-sum game. What I give you, I lose. And I have to do a lot to give to you.

And once you do it and you realize how incredibly happy it makes you, just saying hello to a stranger on the street and seeing that person smile at you makes you happy. And so you get so much back from doing that. And I have a proposal for the schools of British Columbia that we have a competition, each school at the beginning of the year, for the children to use their creativity, to think outside the box, to think of ways that they could help other people.

They could make the world a better place. It could be at the level of class or grade or school. And then all the relevant people, the children, the teachers, the janitors, the people who work in the cafeteria, vote on what they think is the best plan.

And then the children do it. They make, they create the possibility of doing this, whether it's helping people across the world or helping in your school. And then at the end of the year, there can be awards for not only the brightest student and the best athlete, but the student who's shown the most kindness, shown the most compassion.

And it can come not only from the school, but from the students themselves, where they vote. I think it can go beyond this, where the province gives awards for this, not only to children, but to adults. And not only to the fancy people who are leading the brigade, but to the no-name people who don't have fancy degrees or fancy positions, but in their everyday life, are doing things to make the world a better place.

And I think my university, the University of British Columbia, could get in the act and offer a scholarship of a thousand dollars to any student who's won this award from their school. And I'm going to be quiet to give time.

[Speaker 3] (5:39:08 - 5:39:29)

In this little ear button, I'm getting very, very significant signals that we need to move along. I do want to allow Mary to have, if you like, the final word. So, Mary, over to you.

[Speaker 18] (5:39:30 - 5:39:31)

Thank you, Your Holiness.

[Speaker 10] (5:39:32 - 5:43:48)

We always, Your Holiness always stresses me for us to be kind to each other. And really, kindness is the greatest thing and the greatest virtue we can teach our children. Just saying to them going out in the morning, be kind to everyone you meet, because kindness develops compassion.

And you see, when we are educating our children, what are we educating them for? Well, I believe human beings are made to love and to be loved. And deep down inside us, we have this energy and this need to be loved, just to be accepted, just for somebody to reach out to smile and accept us.

And perhaps the hardest thing for any parent is to accept their child and to love the child with a passion exactly where they're at, and not wanting to control and to dominate and to form them into being successful in the world. And that is really an awful temptation to make our kids be like us. You know, every single individual is a new created being with tremendous potential.

And our children, the greatest gift we can give them is to allow them to be themselves. Now, we are called to be happy human beings. That's our first calling in life, to be happy, fulfilled, joyful human beings.

Wouldn't it be awful to reach old age and never known what it would be to be fully alive? And you know, like any other skill or gift, there are steps to being happy. And after all, we learn how to be the best golfer.

We spend hours being the best scientist. How many hours do we spend? And this is not a selfish thing, because if you are not within yourself, happy and compassionate and gentle and joyous, you cannot give this to your children or anyone around you.

So happiness starts within. And there are steps to happiness. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

And you can be a joyous person. Because we've taught the three R's. We never taught our children, or now we learned in our schooling system, the most important thing.

How do we deal with the emotions inside us? The desperate fear, the desperate anxiety, the desperate need to somehow fit into this world. How do we deal with those crucifying emotions which stop us being compassionate?

Because when you're in inner pain, it's like having a toothache. You can't reach out to others or compassionate because you're so frightened and here of people who are different, people who are more educated than you, because you are so insecure and lonely in here. The journey is a painful, fearful, lonely journey.

And the only way we can help, God help the little children coming into such a world. The

only way we can help them through that journey is to help them understand that we all have these emotions. We are all afraid.

We all worry. We're all anxious. We wonder if we say the wrong word and get embarrassed.

Will people see that the emperor has no clothes? I think overcoming these emotions and the education system, starting from the children very young in the home, to learn to be happy, fulfilled, honest children. And I think it will do it through the education and through the families.

[Speaker 12] (5:44:03 - 5:48:16)

In Chinese philosophy, all of life is said to have two balancing characteristics, yin and yang. At the center of these two forces, there is stillness, the foremost dimension of consciousness. Yang is the outward movement into form, the energy of making things happen.

Yin is the inward return to the foremost dimension, the energy of allowing and accepting things to happen in their own time. In our everyday lives, most of us tend to engage in predominantly yang activities. It becomes essential then to find a balance between yin and yang.

In this program, you're invited to learn this balance through the practice of yin yoga. In yin yoga, your work is to be the space for whatever arises by allowing, accepting, and opening, thus returning to the formless dimension. This becomes your spiritual practice, your primary focus in yin yoga.

The secondary aspect to this practice is the physical body. On this level, yin yoga aims at reaching the connective tissues beneath your muscles, that is to say, the ligaments, bones, and the joints of the body. There are three points to keep in mind as you work with these postures.

The first is to find your comfortable edge, that place where the body begins to feel resistance. As you feel into this edge, simply allow the sensations of the resistance to be as it is. However, if you experience any sharp or acute pain, slowly back out of the pose.

The next point is to become still. There are three kinds of stillness you can access. The first is stillness of the physical body.

The second is a subtle stillness of the breath, accessed through conscious breathing. This leads into the third, that is stillness of the mind. Here, the mind becomes empty of thoughts, or if there are occasional thoughts, you don't identify with them.

Instead, you are present as the awareness in which the thoughts arise. The last thing to

keep in mind as you practice yin yoga is to hold the posture and relax your body while doing so. You may hold the posture anywhere from 3 to 20 minutes.

It may be helpful to use props, such as a cushion, bolster, pillows, or rolled-up towels. Use these props under your head, knees, buttocks, or any other part of the body that may need support in holding the pose comfortably. Most importantly, don't judge or criticize yourself.

Your body's flexibility can vary from day to day. It can be influenced by your emotional and mental state, or can even be affected by your diet. Do not compare today's practice with yesterday's.

Start each practice anew and become the space for what arises in each moment. The core of our practice is acceptance of what is. This is the portal into presence.

[Speaker 1] (5:48:34 - 6:02:53)

Welcome to Kim's yin yoga session. If you're new to yin yoga, you may be surprised to find that each pose is held for quite a long time. Longer, it may seem, than is comfortable.

And that itself can actually be a very important, if not the most important part of your practice. The discomfort that arises as you hold each pose. The discomfort may be of two kinds.

It may be physical discomfort, including perhaps slight physical pain. And it may be mental discomfort. The mind does not like to be forced into holding still.

And so, what do you do when mental discomfort arises, or physical discomfort, or in many cases, both? Do you use willpower? It says, I'm going to hold this pose no matter what.

That seems one way of getting beyond the discomfort or the mental judgment that says, I don't want to go on. But this is not the approach that is most helpful. Willpower or effort or fighting against the discomfort that arises.

What you use is the power of your awareness. So, as you're in the pose and you notice after a couple of minutes or so, that discomfort arises, you apply your awareness to the discomfort. And what that implies is that you allow it to be as it is.

So you don't fight it. There is no effort involved. No willpower.

But a completely different consciousness is brought to it. And that is the consciousness of allowing what is to be as it is. And that's perhaps the most useful part beyond the physical benefits you may derive from yoga practice.

The most useful part is that it enables you to become familiar with allowing whatever arises in the present moment to be as it is. And what you practice with here is the discomfort itself. So as the discomfort arises, you're aware of it and you open yourself up to the is-ness of that moment.

It is as it is. And suddenly you find there's the discomfort and there's the space around it. And the space around it is the awareness.

So you don't react. You're not identified with the condition of discomfort. You become the space around the discomfort.

And that's a very interesting discovery when you first discover that that is possible. That you can become the space around the discomfort. So it exists there in your space, so to speak, but it is not who you are.

It does not control you anymore. You have transcended the discomfort, although it may still be there. Sometimes it may happen that as you practice bringing that aware space to it the discomfort suddenly subsides.

But that's not the purpose of this practice. If it subsides, it's fine. It's a bonus, an added bonus.

But whether or not the discomfort subsides does not really matter. You can practice successfully even if it does not subside. So you don't practice the awareness in order to get rid of the discomfort.

That would make it into a means to an end. But the arising of awareness here is an end in itself. In addition, there's another possibility for you here.

And that is using the stillness of the pose and join it with mental stillness. So as you hold a pose, see if you can be as still in your mind as the body is still. In other words, make it part of your practice while you hold each pose to be free of thinking as much as possible.

Now, what I mentioned earlier, allowing what is to be is really intrinsically connected with the ability to be free of thinking. So when you allow what is to be almost naturally, the mind slows down because a lot of mental activity is to do with denying the present moment in one way or another. So, observe that as you hold the pose and surrender to what is, allow what is to be, be the space around the discomfort, and it's almost naturally now what arises is a state of consciousness that is largely free of conceptual thinking.

In other words, there are no words going through your head. It's just a spacious presence or an alert presence. And so if you can bring that alert presence into your practice, that would be of the greatest benefit.

And you will find that the yoga practice is really a microcosm of the way in which you

can lead your life. So, it's a structured setting, and in that structured setting, you practice bringing a different state of consciousness to the challenges of life. Now, in the structured setting, the challenges that come are limited, but they may be considerable.

Pain, discomfort, too long, too much, don't want to go, why am I doing this? These are all challenges, physical challenges, emotional challenges, mental challenges. And what happens in everyday life?

The same thing on a larger scale. Physical challenges, emotional challenges, mental challenges, challenges of situations, challenges of people. So, in that structured setting, you practice not being a reactive entity anymore to each one of these challenges and be controlled and dominated by the challenges, but to have invite the arising of a state of consciousness that transcends the challenges.

Presence, awareness. So, if you can allow the discomfort to be as it is, and if you can bring thoughtless awareness to that moment, then as you go back into daily life, what you have learned in the structured setting, what you have practiced in the structured setting of yoga, can be applied to daily life. So, when challenges arise in daily life, you can again realize that this moment is as it is, and the only sane way to live is to realize the one could say inevitability of the isness of the present moment, because it already is.

And so, you bring allowing the quality of yin, which is embracing, allowing whatever form this moment takes to be as it is. So, what you've learned in your structured yoga practice can be applied to any situation in daily life. And if you practice in your yin yoga sessions, holding without effort, holding effortlessly the state of alert attention, in which thought does not arise or arises only sporadically and is not important, that ability to face situations and deal with things in that state of alert presence in which thought either does not arise or is secondary, that is a revolutionary transformation of consciousness. If you can live that, you become intelligent and you transcend the conditioned mind.

You connect with the unconditioned consciousness, and that's true intelligence. So, it's amazing what can arise out of this seemingly small practice of holding a pose. So, I wish you well in your yin yoga practice and in your daily life practice.

Stay present, alert, connected with the power of now, the power of awareness, which is who you truly are.

[Speaker 11] (6:03:16 - 6:07:37)

Before the body, before the story, before the name, beyond the mind, attempt to find or explain. Before the breath, beyond the sense of pleasure or of pain, and after death, and after death, I am. Within the heart, the whole and part of everything I see, behind the eyes, beyond disguise, reflecting me at the silent core, and yet before phenomena

began.

Oh, and after it, and after it, I am. And many differences separate us on the surface, yes, but I cannot find a boundary in consciousness. And when you ask me, where does awareness begin and does it end?

I have to say, I have to say, I've always been within the body, without the body, not subject to changing moods or states of health or points of view, without needs before the deeds and the monuments of man. Oh, and after them, and after them, I am. Many differences separate us on the surface, yes, but I cannot find a boundary in consciousness.

And when you ask me, where does awareness begin and does it end? I have to say, I have to say, I've always been at the silent core and yet before phenomena begin. Oh, and after it, and after it, I am.

[Speaker 1] (6:08:31 - 8:05:27)

Welcome to this afternoon we are spending together. As I was sitting in the back room just now, at five to one, a voice came through the loudspeaker and said, this is your five minute warning, show time in five minutes. That's what they do in theaters.

So this must be show time. But of course, it's not a performance. There may be an association in your mind of theater stage.

Well, there's no curtain, but there could be an association in your mind of this kind of setting with performance. But it's been canceled. And instead, all you get is a man sitting in a chair speaking.

And not even someone who has very much of a stage presence. So if you expected a performance or even if you expected a lecture that's not what you're getting. You're getting less than that and more than that at the same time.

The focal point this afternoon is not here on the speaker. The main character in this non-performance is sitting down there in that chair. And the words will always point you back to that.

If you think there's something interesting out here, there isn't. If you expected food for thought, you probably won't get very much. So just a few words I'd like to say about how to be here this afternoon.

Because if you don't know how to be here fully, very quickly it's going to get boring and uninteresting. Because you're not getting enough stimulus for thinking. So, and in an event like this with so many people, it's inevitable that a few are going to walk out after 20 or 30 minutes.

They knew not how to be here fully. They were not completely present here. They were absorbed in the stream of thinking, which is normal.

One reason why we are here is that you're being taken out of the stream of thinking and realize that you haven't disappeared. That when you step out of the stream of thinking, consciousness is still there. You're fully conscious sitting there listening.

That's awareness that doesn't need thought. This is the new level of consciousness that's arising in human beings. Otherwise, so many people wouldn't be here.

Certainly not to experience this speaker hasn't got that much to offer, but it's because something is happening within you that corresponds to these words. The words point back to that and the words and that which is beyond the words here in this field pulls that level of consciousness, which I sometimes call the unconditioned consciousness, out of you, so to speak. But it is already arising in most of you.

Otherwise, you wouldn't be here. With the exception, perhaps, of those who came here involuntarily because of insistence of their husband or wife. You must come to this.

Okay. Okay. I might as well check this guy out.

Okay. And then after 20 minutes, what's he talking about? I can't.

I just can't figure out what it is that he's talking about. And then restlessness comes in because not enough stimulus is being given to the mind. It often starts with a twitching leg that was designed by universal intelligence to wake you up.

Nothing better than waking up a little shock. And life tends to do that to us. The little ego says, please, no, I don't want any of this.

But it happens. So there's the twitching, and finally, can't stand this anymore. So there may be quite a few of you who have never come to a talk like this.

So just a few pointers of how to be here, not just as a mind or as a head attached to a body, and, you know, when you're a head attached to a body, you're always uneasy and waiting for the next thing. When is he going to say something meaningful? Some interesting new theory that I can believe in or disagree with even better.

That keeps it going. I disagree completely. So one thing we surrender here this afternoon is this inner need, which is the human mind.

This enormous inner need, usually unrecognized because it's so normal. This enormous inner need for the next moment. When you look at people, you can actually see they're looking for it.

They are overlooking always this, and they're looking there, the next moment. And with

that comes that continuous state of unease with this moment. This moment becomes a hindrance to where I need to get, to the next moment that's going to fulfill me or do something for me.

Let's get there. Where is it? That's a normal human state.

And if you cannot step out of that, you will not be able to survive this afternoon here. So how do you step out of that momentum of the thought processes that are always moving towards the next thing? Move your attention into this moment.

First thing that it means for many people when their attention moves out of thinking into presence, they become more acutely aware of their sense perceptions, their surroundings. A certain alertness arises as if you had been away and now suddenly you're back. And it is true.

You had been away. Your attention, your whole sense of identity was absorbed by thought processes, most of them problematic. Another problem to solve before I can be free.

So why we are here this afternoon is to experience at first hand what many of you are experiencing already and know it. And many others who are present here experience already without knowing it. And I will be pointing to that to see that you can recognize that this state of presence is already probably arising in you even if you don't know it yet because it is not recognized by the movement of thought.

It is not recognized by the mind made me. It recognizes its problems. It recognizes its need for the next moment.

It cannot recognize the state of awareness, the arising presence. But we are here in this field to enable that state of consciousness to arise more fully. So your attention moves into the field of now.

And a very helpful thing that I may be pointing to quite a few times during this afternoon as you sit here is to feel a certain connectedness with your inner energy field, the inner body. To sense that you are alive. To feel, to sense a little bit the inner energy field of your body, hands, legs.

There is a certain aliveness there. Usually you would not be aware of it because all your attention is absorbed by thinking. Now you place some attention away from thinking into the sense of aliveness.

In the body as you sit here. That provides an anchor for staying present here. And this, you'll be able to listen much better when you are present here.

Anchored within the body. Inhabiting the body as you sit here. Just and feel a certain

aliveness.

Maybe you cannot feel it everywhere yet, but a certain aliveness is there. That's enough to have some attention there. Then the rest of your attention is on the sense perceptions, especially listening and seeing.

So, being present here, it is an amazing shift in consciousness and yet to the mind it is meaningless. It is insignificant. It doesn't even recognize it.

It says, so this can't be important. My problems are important. How does that solve my problems?

It does. What is coming to an end, what has to come to an end on this planet very soon is a state of consciousness that is totally identified with thinking. Where you only know yourself as thought processes and you're totally identified with whatever happens and experience the corresponding emotions that go with those thoughts.

That is the egoic mind-made entity, me, with its little story, with its unsatisfactory story, never satisfying for long the story of me. Always something comes in to sabotage the story the way it should be going. And certainly it hasn't gone the way it was supposed to go, the story of me.

But I still have some future to make it work. The mind-made entity, conditioned by its surroundings, its past, to only know yourself as that, that is coming to an end as the normal human state of consciousness. Because that excessive identification with thought processes prevents you from knowing who you are at the deeper levels of your being.

You remain a surface phenomenon, an uneasy ripple or wave movements on the surface. Just here, always never sensing that deep connectedness with who you are underneath the movement of thought. And that leads to dreadful madness on the planet.

The madness of, that we experience in interpersonal relationships, the collective madness on the planet. There are certain focal points on the planet where you can see the collective madness more clearly than others, but it is everywhere. And when you get to the root of it, all that which creates this enormous amount of violence and suffering on the planet, and is even threatening the survival of the planet.

What is at the root of that, what one could only describe as dysfunction, human dysfunction, of which we've seen so much in the 20th century. And what we are seeing now is a continuation of it. What is it that lies at the root of all that?

But that is also within ourselves still, although the new is arising, the old consciousness, the mind identified state is still there, it comes in waves. There was an article written last week in the New York Times by an Israeli writer about the madness in the Middle East that we are witnessing there. And he used an interesting expression, he tried to get to

the bottom of it.

What is it that makes people behave in such a way? And he came up with a very interesting realization, but perhaps did not realize himself how profound the implications are of this realization that he came up with. What he said was, the people who are involved in this conflict do not seem to have the ability, now he uses an interesting expression, the ability to accommodate a competing narrative.

Narrative means it is the story that you are telling yourself and others which interprets your life situation. A narrative can be a personal narrative, that is the story you are telling yourself and others about who you are. And a narrative can be a collective story, that is the story that everybody who is part of this nation or tribe is telling themselves and others and is reinforced continuously which is their interpretation of how things are.

And each side has its narrative. And then there is a competing narrative that is the opposite of my narrative. Every narrative is a story, every story is mind movement, is thought structures.

Every story is the movement of thought which becomes certain thought structures become deeply lodged in the mind and they hang on in there. This is how it is. And your sense of self, your sense of identity, your sense of who you are becomes entangled with that narrative.

Now people do that on a personal level in their own personal lives and in some places more than others, less so in countries like the one we are. But in certain countries, the collective narrative still has enormous hold on people. The collective mental conditioning overwhelms the mind and every personal sense of self it really is predominantly dominated by the collective us and our story.

Our narrative, this is how things are. And you find that collective identification very strong in all those places where there is an enormous amount of conflict and violence. And so there is the seeming inability to see what is happening that I am identifying with a particular way of interpreting reality.

And I am mistaking a thought or a set of thoughts for the truth of how things are or the truth of who I am if it's on the personal level. So people do it collectively and personally to themselves. Certain ideas form in your mind who you are, conditioning, parents told you, society tells you, or you react against what parents told you and society tells you of who you are and it's also conditioned.

And so you are, then your sense of self is in the movement of thought and there are certain repetitive thought movements that then provide you with your sense of self, personal, predominantly personal or predominantly collective. And there's the inability to see the limitations of thought, the inability to see that ultimately no thought that you

have concerning anything or anybody, yourself, a situation, a place, an event, can hold the absolute truth. It cannot encompass the truth.

It can, a thought at best will give you an aspect of the truth. It can, every thought that you think about anything or anybody is a temporary perspective. When you know thought to be a temporary perspective, thought is beautiful.

Thought enables you to do many things. When you forget, when you do not know that every thought that you have about anything or anybody is one of many, many possible perspectives on this person, on this situation, on this place, whatever it may be. When you don't know that, you mistake an interpretation, a thought, a judgment.

Jesus used the word judgment a lot. What he's really talking about is thought because ultimately every thought is a judgment. As long as you know that, it's fine.

You can use thinking, thinking arises. But the illusion that anything that you can express through thought can embody the absolute truth is not there anymore. So you are no, that means when your sense of who you are is totally identified with the story that you are telling yourself and others, that is an illusory sense of self and most people are trapped in it.

Not just the people in the Middle East or Northern Ireland or wherever there may be long-standing conflict that's been going on for in some places hundreds of years. In what used to be Yugoslavia, they've been fighting for hundreds of years. Every generation absorbs the same mental conditioning, identifies with the same thought structures that says we are right, we are that and that and they are totally mind.

And then you are a mind-made entity. You don't know who you are beyond that your entire life then is designed to strengthen that ultimately illusory entity, me and my story or us and our story. And that entity is a thought form consisting of different thoughts that come together and that entity says me, I, or us, we, and them.

And because that sense of identity is so fearful and fragile because deep down you don't feel that you really know yourself. So it has to be reinforced by having the other to fight against. I define myself when I am trapped in a mind-made thought-based sense of self with a collective or personal or a mixture.

I am trapped in an illusion that seeks to strengthen itself, that seeks to strengthen its boundary, me and my mental position, my story, my truth. Of course you don't call it my truth, you call it the truth. And it needs the other to define itself through.

It needs some kind of conflict or enemy out there because then that state of self that is mind-made feels stronger for a moment and then you need some more. You can see it in your personal life as the need to be right in an argument. The enormous need to be right that has a lot of emotion with it and a lot of pain with it.

You have expressed your thoughts, somebody else says the exact opposite and says, you're completely wrong. What do you mean? And people usually in a situation like that become totally unconscious.

What that means, I'm not saying that they faint. And they become unconscious. It's almost like faint.

They become unconscious in the sense that they are totally identified with thought. That's spiritually speaking means unconscious, totally identified with thought processes and the emotions that go with them. And that is the energy that happens when there's identification with total identification with thought as me.

A mental position as me. And you can see in relationships, partners, how very easily they start arguing and it's each person identifies with their mental position. This is how it is.

No, it's not. Yes. So, and this has been going on for many thousands, thousands, hundreds of thousands of years.

And even intensifying that identification with thinking, intensifying. It was a necessary stage in human evolution. It all started with the apple.

Because the apple came from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is the arising of thought. Yes, no, right, wrong.

Yes. You can tell the difference between this and that thought is the ability to separate, to cut up into little pieces, to analyze. And we had humans, humanity had to go through it.

It was an evolutionary stage. And I'm saying it was, although we are still in it to a large extent, but we are coming out of it. And as this evolutionary stage reaches its end, the dysfunction increases because simply it's coming to an end.

When it's, it no longer works. That's all. It doesn't work anymore for survival.

For a long time, it helped humans to survive. They could think about how to make a trap and do this. And then it has served its purpose.

It becomes dysfunctional just as the caterpillar becomes dysfunctional just before it becomes a butterfly. Life doesn't work anymore as a caterpillar. It's getting too hard.

I can't crawl anymore. But of course, something in the caterpillar says, no, I'm not going to change. That's just what I am.

Oh, it's fearful. What's going to happen to me? So this, the conflict in the Middle East is just one example of a dysfunction in the human mind, which this writer expressed in those words.

He called it the inability to accommodate a competing narrative, which means to see another perspective and see all. And to recognize thought, every thought as a fragment, not the truth, a fragment. So this, whenever you see whatever you can say about another human being is a temporary truth, a temporary relative fragment.

You can say he's a dreadful, he's the worst criminal I've ever met. Okay, this is one perspective. Maybe true at this moment.

And you may not have seen him interacting with his child. You may not have seen him at the age of six. You may not see him in 20 years time when he's enlightened, become free through his suffering.

But thought fixes everything. It wants to fix things. This is how it is.

Conclusions, premature conclusions that you draw concerning people, events, situations. And the mind is looking out for that. It's waiting whenever this mind-made entity meets someone, it's already beginning to judge.

How does this person fit into my thought structures? And then five minutes later, it has an opinion. And often then that opinion is there, it's fixed.

And then it's repeated to others. And then people cling to their opinions. It's part of who I think I am, me as mind.

So the movement that is happening in human consciousness that is happening now for the first time on a wider scale, because it has to happen for the species to survive, is a movement out of thought, out of identification with thought. The arising of something within you that is deeper than thought. Now, what is thought?

Thought is one of the many forms that consciousness takes. Consciousness in humans manifests to a large extent as thought. Consciousness manifests, the one consciousness manifests as an entire universe.

Flowers, trees, the planet, animals, temporary formations, galaxies. And in humans, it becomes thought. And to realize the vastness that is there underneath thought.

And that is the arising of a new dimension of consciousness. It doesn't mean that you're not going to think anymore. Thought still comes.

But complete belief in every thought that comes, that doesn't happen anymore. In other words, as this begins, you're beginning to have a new relationship to thought. You can see thought that happens inside you.

The reactivity of thought, very strong. The reactivity of the thought made me. What's the next thing I can react to?

To strengthen myself. To have a little enemy, at least for a few moments. And in having a little enemy, which can be a situation that I'm complaining about.

A person having a little enemy for a moment makes me feel more strongly. I can sense who I am. You did that to me.

It is satisfying to the entity, the egoic entity. For a moment, it feels stronger in its sense of self. Every time it complains about something, there's a contraction in my sense of self.

And also a strengthening of the mind-made entity. And then it's looking out, what's the next thing I can react to? And it sits behind a wheel in the car.

Some people, habitually, they carry their waiting for the next thing to react to. And you might think it's always another person. That is, everyone to some extent carries that inside.

This is not a personal shortcoming of yours. It is not a personal thing at all. It is collective conditioning of the human mind.

It is a collective structure. The need to react, the need to have a problem, an enemy somewhere, is unconscious. When you make it conscious, when it happens, you see it.

Ah! I'm right. And you feel the emotion that goes with being right.

With your partner, wherever. And it's an amazing thing when you watch that in yourself. You can see it in others more easily, of course.

Look how unconscious he is. I can't believe how unconscious you are. To see something in oneself, a reaction, a identification with a mental position.

And suddenly to see it, perhaps in the middle of it, is enough. And not even to say, oh, I shouldn't be having that reaction. I'm an advanced spiritual person.

I shouldn't be having that. Something is wrong here. But there it is.

And the advanced spiritual person, how does one become an advanced spiritual person? Does it require a lot of knowledge or some arduous practice of self-denial through beating yourself up or sitting in the cold for hours, meditate? I'm going to get there.

I'm going to get there. But the advanced spiritual person is the person that allows this moment to be. Oh, is that it?

Allows this moment to be because why should I allow this moment to be? Because it is. Because it always is as it is now.

But it is. Yeah, but this is not how it should be. It still is.

And then you see that you go through life or you have been going through life. A lot of your life has been an inner no. And the egoic mind made entity thrived on the no.

It thrives on having enemies. It doesn't need to go as far as to make you into a suicide bomber. It could.

That's an extreme manifestation of the same thing. It thrives on that. And then, of course, it says, I can't allow this to be.

There are so many things in this world that should not be. There are so many things in this world that are unjust, unfair. So much suffering.

So much. Yes, of course, that is true. That there's an enormous amount of suffering in this world and in yourself.

Suffering is present in every human being in different forms. In the affluent West, there is an enormous amount of suffering too. Not perhaps on the material level.

Mental, emotional suffering. And the illusion is to believe that when I allow this moment to be, I will become ineffective. I will become passive.

And nothing is going to change anymore. I will be stuck with this dreadful moment for the rest of my life. So to get rid of this dreadful moment, I've got to fight it.

And then, of course, the next moment, which is the same as this moment, dreadful again. That state. And here we have an approach, another perspective on what it means to be fully awake here and now.

We pointed already to the helpful fact that you can feel the inner body as you sit here, even now. That takes you out of the stream of thinking and thinking. And then you can become conscious of this moment instead of running away from it or internally denying it, fighting it.

You can become conscious of how things are right now. This is how things are. And you allow.

And what is could be a reaction inside yourself. It could be an old, and then you see it and don't make it into a problem. And you watch the emotion that comes with it.

There it is. You allow that. So you don't become an advanced spiritual practitioner by achieving something, total control of all my inner states and total control of external conditions.

I am in total control of my life. This is, of course, the ego feels, I need to, I need to stay or lie awake in bed all night, because I have important problems to think about. If I don't, if I don't worry, my life is going to fall apart.

I'll be irresponsible. Or as one famous actress said, I read in the paper some while ago, who, by the way, is always ill. She said about some situation, she said, I wouldn't be human if I didn't worry myself sick about it.

And worry is identification with thought, useless thought, a lot of it, of course, even psychologists who are not interested in spiritual matters have recognized that 95% of our thinking is pretty repetitive and useless. So, and one way of stepping out of it, that entire conditioned movement needs reactivity, needs opposition, needs resistance. It's the mind-made entity.

So when now the possibility arises of living in a different ways, and if it were not happening already, I could not make it happen to you. The fact that you are here and recognize something, some truth that you already know, that is already happening inside you, that means you don't need convincing. You recognize the fundamental truth of living, the possibility that there is the possibility now, perhaps there wasn't before for most humans, that there is the possibility now of living in alignment with the suchness of this moment, inner alignment.

And that is the state out of which, amazingly, effective action comes. Because an intelligence that is greater than the conditioned movement of thought is suddenly able to operate in and through you. And so that state of complete alignment with what the Buddha actually called the suchness of things, which is always what is here and now.

I call it the form that this moment takes. This moment, of course, is the only moment there is. Is it?

No, I don't agree with that. There is a next moment. Okay, that was somebody's mind.

There is only this moment ever. Nothing could be outside of it. Couldn't.

Nothing could happen outside of it. It has to be now for anything to be. Being is now.

Life can only be now. You could remember something that happened. How was it possible that this happened?

It happened in the field of now. It happened when it was now, and I remember it now. Now is the only reality it has.

In the future, there seems to be so much of it, until there's very little. And that can be frightening. Your future shrinks.

Your past grows. And you are gradually pushed out of your life. On one level, past and future seem so real.

Time, past and future. On one level, yes, you can't deny it that there is such a thing. Time, everything passes so quickly.

It's fleeting. Gone. Gone.

My childhood, gone. My first marriage, gone. Second marriage, gone.

And so there's... Please stop, you say to time. I don't want to be dragged along this stream of time towards my inevitable doom.

But you can't stop it. Also on one level, time seems to be very... to dominate everything.

And yet, on another level, past and future don't exist. There's only now, always now. One can't really argue with that, that your life is always this moment.

Your life cannot not ever be this moment. So on one level, you have what appears to be very real, and yet it's always now. Let's stay with that fact, because this is a practical session, not philosophical.

A discourse on time belongs somewhere else. There's a practical fact that it's always now. And if I'm never in alignment, or extremely rarely in alignment with now, then it means I'm out of alignment with life itself.

Which means the power that is inherent in life, the intelligence that is inherent in life, the beauty that is inherent in life, cannot fully express itself through this contracted entity that spends most of its time, its nows, in now, wanting to, needing to get somewhere else, the next moment. Which is really only a thought. Future is a thought, a mind movement.

So when we see that, and we also see another strange fact, that first we see there is only ever this moment. So you might as well make friends with it, since you haven't got anything else. Hmm.

But then a strange thing happens. People believe that the now is very short-lived. They think a now is only a brief thing.

I think in the, one of the leaflets about this our afternoon together, it said, spend an afternoon in the now. That will be the longest now you've ever experienced. But of course, yes, this is what this is about.

Now, the fact that change happens continuously doesn't mean that there are many different nows. The form that this moment takes changes. Continuously.

The field of now remains. Often things happen that are challenging in the now. A strange, it is very strange that when you allow whatever form this now takes to be as it is, the deeper level of your being opens up.

This is a miracle. When you see it in your life, how your life changes as you live in alignment with what is rather than against what is, that is the end of hundreds of

thousands of years of conditioning and you are stepping out of thought. Because it is the movement of thought that judges continuously what is as not enough, not good or needs more than this.

The movement of thought, the thought made entity always needs more. I'm not full enough yet. Not complete yet.

It never is. Where's the next thing that I can identify with? That's why people look so uneasy a lot of the time because they're looking for the next thing to make their sense of self a bit more complete.

A bit more, please. Okay, more. And the more is supplied by the next moment which doesn't exist.

It's a dreadful way to live. And you see another fact. For thousands of years, the Buddhists have already recognized that everything in this universe is interconnected.

And now physicists also see that ultimately there is not, there are no isolated events or isolated phenomena. There is a web of interconnectedness that is the entire cosmos. It is all connected to everything else, not what appears to us as an isolated event, it's connected to the totality on deeper levels.

And that is good to realize. And this brings us to the strange fact of the inevitability of this moment. Because the totality of the universe has brought this about.

It happens because it cannot be otherwise. And then you allow it, you see that connectedness and you allow what is to be, you bring a yes to it. Suddenly, and now I'm using words to describe something that is really beyond words, with this yes to what is now, something opens up, which I can only describe, and many of you already know, have had glimpses of it, or it's already very strongly present in your life.

I can only describe as there is a sense of space around what happens when you allow it to happen. A spaciousness in which this event, and that is an inner sense of space, a spaciousness in which this event is happening. It could be, for example, the obnoxious behavior of some person close to you.

She's doing it again, he's doing it again. Before it brought up the inevitable, and suddenly you see the inevitability of this moment. And suddenly you allow, and so the event comes, and there's the, or something breaks down, and you go, oh, it's allowed.

That's strange. There's the event, or let's say some dreadful noise happens suddenly, and usually there would be reaction. This shouldn't be, they should, why don't they?

And suddenly you allow it. Oh, suddenly there is a space around it, a space around what happens. One could also call it a peace around what happens.

And you can notice it particularly when you do this when something so-called unpleasant happens, and you allow it. There's suddenly a space around it, a larger context in which that happens. And that space is a space of peace around it.

Some people had to be driven by life to an extreme form of suffering before that happened to them spontaneously inside. And in the midst of hell on earth, in the most dreadful conditions, something inside them stopped resisting this moment. And there was a vast sense of peace and space, despite the appearance of evil or badness in this moment.

That is the inner shift, is not when you demand that the world should change. People have been demanding that for a long time. But allow the is-ness of things and see what happens then.

Because the allowing is the arising of the new state of consciousness. If it were not arising in you, these words would be meaningless. You would not understand even what it means when I say allow this moment to be, or you would feel threatened by it, shout something and run out of the room.

And so that is what in spiritual language is sometimes called surrender. What really is alignment, inner alignment with what is. Now, what that really means is for thousands and thousands of years, human beings have been totally absorbed absorbed in what I sometimes call object consciousness.

Their entire attention goes into thoughts that arise often in reaction to things that happen. Every thought is an object in your consciousness and takes up your entire attention. And so people inhabit their entire life, consists, is crammed full with thoughts, object consciousness.

This knowledge, think about, I think about, I'm thinking about this, and then the next thing, and then the next thought comes, which each thought absorbs your attention. Each thought is connected to the me thought form. No space, complete absence of space, just one thing after another, one thought after another.

And what arises with the yes to what is, is space consciousness. Another word for that is stillness. Stillness.

Inner stillness arises through the simple yes to now. And that is the new dimension of consciousness. And that is the essence of who you are.

So you are on the one hand, something that is manifested in form. You have a form identity, a life situation. Every person here is somehow, one could almost say, trapped in their particular life situation.

Most of them problematic to a larger or lesser degree. The more the new consciousness

is arising in you, the more the problematic nature of your life situation lessens. Not that life does not present challenges anymore, but you no longer perceive your life in terms of problems.

So there is your life situation, and that differs for each one of you. Some are asking themselves what their life purpose is on this planet. What am I going to do with my life?

Others may not have that much future left. In some of you, the body may not be healthy. In others, there may be some very problematic configuration of events in your life.

Life situations differ. Some are rich, some are poor. Some are important in the eyes of the world.

Some are not important in the eyes of the world. Or some of you may be important today and unimportant tomorrow in the eyes of the world. I was unimportant for many years.

Now I'm important in the eyes of the world. And then, who knows, next year I may be gone in the eyes of the world. That sense of who you are that's derived from your life situation, which is in the corresponding thought forms, we are going beyond that.

We respect that. Yes, you are in this particular situation, in those relationships. These are things that you cannot deny.

There is the story of me. There's the story of my life. And it's not going to come to an end this afternoon.

No, the story of me continues because that is part of my form. Identity. And some stories are happier than others.

But there is a strong element of unsatisfactoriness and unhappiness in every story. Not just yours. The element of unsatisfactoriness is built into the very structure of this mind form that is the story of me.

But it is only unsatisfactory as long as you are looking for some self-fulfillment, some enhanced identity through improving your life situation or the story that you're telling yourself about who you are. Then it's always unsatisfying. But when you realize that on that level, you're never going to be satisfied.

On that level, true completion is never reached. You can never truly know yourself, no matter how much you add to yourself through knowledge, possessions, relationships, whatever experiences, even spiritual experiences, wanting them to add to me. There are many people here who have had many great spiritual experiences.

Come and, oh, well, okay, let's hang on to that one. That was good. And you can tell yourself the story.

I had a great insight once. I had a vision. And now it's left me.

But I hope it's going to come back. That's the, on that level to seek something, it means to seek something that the world, because the story is the world, can't give you. The demand to be made happy through some rearrangement in your story is an impossible demand.

The demand to be made happy by the world, make me happy. I have a right to be made happy by the world. It is true, one could say that you have a right to the state of joy as your natural state of deep inner connectedness when you know who you are beyond thought.

It's not even that you have a right, that's a conceptual thought. It just is. But the world isn't even here to make you happy.

Oh, that means, oh, if it's not here to make me happy, then what is it here for? It's to wake you up. And one could say the world is here to make you conscious.

And to make you conscious until a certain point is reached, the world makes you suffer. Because you make demands and you have expectations that the world cannot meet. And you suffer.

The story becomes the story of the poor me. And even if the story temporarily becomes victorious, I made it. And then a little while later, it's become, the up has become a down.

What now? You can make it become president of the United States and then forget that you even were president of the United States. And that's, it's not, it's half fleeting.

A former president of the United States is suffering from the disease that many people, older people now have loss of memory. He doesn't remember that he was once president of the United States. That was me.

Oh, that is half fleeting. But it's no different from any other life. You can become an old man or woman and then you're 95.

And then you, was that a dream? Or did that all happen? You wake up in the morning, did I dream my life?

Or did it all happen? And it's not much difference. Not very much difference.

The only question is, are you waking up out of that dream? Which ultimately is the entire world of phenomenal existence has a dream-like quality to it because it, everything evaporates so quickly. Gone.

Gone. And then you still hang on to thought forms that were, but it's gone. And for many

people, this dream-like existence has been somewhat of a nightmare.

And that is good. Because only a nightmare will want you to wake up, will make you want to wake up. I can't stand this dream anymore.

Then for a while, you demand that this dream must change. And for a little while, you rearrange it and it becomes a little bit more pleasant. You have a new identity.

I'm now rethinking myself. A new me. You can tell yourself some new story, but it's another story.

So the waking up is knowing yourself who you are beyond the story, and that cannot be defined through any concept or word. You can only know it at this moment. Here.

As the aliveness, the alert presence in which what you are perceiving at this moment is taking place. You're perceiving the voice, the room, the man on the chair allowing it to be as it is. And you become aware, one could say, of your own presence as the field in which that perception happens.

It wouldn't be without you. This phenomenon that you're perceiving is inside you. So you are the presence that makes this possible.

And at the deepest level, one can say, you are the now in which everything happens. And that is the arising from within of something that has nothing to do with your life situation. It has nothing to do with whether you have another 50 years to live, or another five months to live.

And nothing to do with whether the world is telling you that you are important, or the world is telling you that you are unimportant. What difference does it make? It's a story in the head.

And then what remains is always the aliveness, the incredible aliveness of this moment, which you don't even know when you're running away from it, deny it, resist it. The incredible power that is hiding behind whatever is happening at this moment. And that is not a power that is separate from who you are.

It is consciousness itself, which is the essence of your being. Not the form that it takes, that's temporary. So you could be sitting on a bus in the state of, yes, beautiful underlying sense of aliveness as you watch the streets go past you, people come in, sit next, and you are there as an alive presence.

And then the dreamlike nature of the phenomenal world becomes actually very enjoyable. All these life forms, the continuous flux of beautiful life forms coming together, separating. Even the traffic can be beautiful when the mind isn't saying, this shouldn't be.

It's all energy movement. If some of it may be a little mad, but that's because humans don't know who they are. So they create a somewhat mad civilization.

But you don't contribute to the madness anymore. You allow that also. And through the allowing, something that is not mad arises.

It can only arise through you. Can't wait for others to wake up. I'm not waking up unless you do.

You go first. So you sit in any situation, or you are standing at the bus stop, and the rain is blowing in your face, and it's windy, and it's cold. And it is.

And there's, in the absence of the story which says, I'm 45 years old, and I'm still standing at the bus stop. I don't have a car. Or I had a car, and it's gone.

This is what my life has come to. Look at those greedy people driving around in their big cars. I hate them.

Life just isn't fair. It's, and the story goes, and so very often the story of me clashes with the form that this moment takes. And this shouldn't be.

But it is. So there can be two people standing at the bus stop. Perhaps two people who have had the similar experiences they had.

They became wealthy, and they were married, and then they lost it all. Went bankrupt, the wife left, the children don't want to see them anymore, and they're standing at a bus stop. One person is standing there with a story running through his head, and it's miserable.

Getting wet, because that adds to the story. The wind. The most miserable existence.

And the other man experienced the same thing. And he's there. Cold, yes.

Getting a bit wet here also, yes. Wet is wet. There's no suffering in wet.

And he's, and then he notices, because he allows this moment without imposing a story on it, the air still smells good, or the sky, the cloud. He will see, first of all, he will see some beauty somewhere, even in the city. But more importantly, he will feel an underlying aliveness, an underlying goodness that has nothing to do with what form this moment takes, and nothing to do with a mental story that you're telling yourself about your identity.

This means your identity has shifted when you are no longer invested, investment of self in the story. Your identity has shifted from a narrative, from a story to something much more real. You are a conscious field of presence at this moment.

And you discover an underlying power and aliveness and goodness to this moment, even if the external form that it takes isn't all that great. And the miracle that happens, because you are now connected with the greater intelligence, with the power of life itself, even on the external level, life tends to become more supportive and helpful, because you are not fighting life anymore. Helpful factors come in, coincidences happen more.

It no longer matters that much, because this moment is as it is. And in knowing that it is as it is, a goodness reveals itself to you that was not apparent when you only saw the surface appearance of this moment. That goodness is not passive.

That goodness is an active power that then comes through you, manifests through you. And it may well be, to carry on with the analogy of the two men, you might say something to the man who is burdened with his unhappy story. Just a word or two, and perhaps there's a beginning of an awakening in him, a tiny moment where he steps out of his story.

And so you become, when you no longer, yourself is no longer in your story, you become, one could almost say, a blessing on this planet. Because something that is deeper than the person, a force, a power that is you and yet deeper than you, can express itself through you. And then it becomes your life purpose to be an expression of that whatever form that may take externally.

But for this to happen, it is necessary that you step out of identification with a storyline. And see, yes, of course, you have a history. But to not tell yourself that story at every moment, but to be here, take your attention out and be here.

And when you notice suffering arises, it's resistance, the story is back, the suffering me is back, and you can step out again. So an alertness comes every time you step out of the story. And a dreamlike thing happens when you fall back into identification with what you're telling yourself in your head about yourself.

It's like really, you can see now why in spiritual language, the term awakening is used, because it is truly an awakening out of thought. And when you fall back into thought and into the story, you can see the difference in consciousness of falling back in into, you're asleep, maybe not snoring, but almost. And so that presence, that is the key that as you go through your life, you have to frequently step out of the story, because the story is happy and unhappy and happy and unhappy, or in some cases, unhappy, unhappy, unhappy.

The intervals of happiness and unhappiness vary, but unhappiness will come again if it's not here now, if you're there in the story. You could have a perfect existence, good job, beautiful husband or wife, loving, beautiful, faithful, plenty of money too, beautiful children, all doing so well, nice house, two cars, everything is so great. It can't stay like

that.

Something will come in eventually, life does that. And if it stays like that for a very long time, the greater the shock when something does come in. That means some kind of loss somewhere, some interference, something not going as it should, and the awakening begins.

Let's be grateful for your sufferings, because you wouldn't be here otherwise. Let's be grateful for the unhappiness, the story that you had to live with. Something, it means it worked, the unhappiness worked because it took you here, and here made the realization that the unhappiness and the suffering has served its purpose, has taken you into awakening.

And once the momentum of awakening has happened, suffering becomes optional. And you are able to choose presence, to choose the yes to now, to choose to walk on the narrow, this very narrow path that is now. And more and more past and future are only there when you need them to refer to, make an appointment for next week, arrange to meet someone, say, I'm going to study this for the next three years.

Okay, practical, then you're back to now. Now, if the next three years you're going to spend every moment hoping to get to the end of the three years, then every moment is reduced to a means to an end. Life loses its aliveness, loses its power, loses its beauty.

A continuous stepping back into now, out of time, out of identification with thought, into the fullness of now. And some people had to go through enormous suffering to learn this, more suffering perhaps than anybody here. Suffering to the point where they couldn't stand it anymore.

And suddenly the shift happened, and there was an inner yes to now. Oh, what's happened? Can't explain it.

Suddenly there's a vitally alive peace. That's the peace that passes all understanding and can be there no matter where you are in your life situation. It can be there whether it's good or bad at the moment.

And if it's very good, you're more likely to be drawn back into the dream world. Oh, it's great, let's have another drink until the next shock happens. So we are becoming familiar here with the state of presence.

Alert, an alert acceptance of what is. With little things, big things. And if you fall back into reactivity, you fall back into a no, then you recognize it.

Oh, there goes another no, okay. Except you're unhappy, which means a story in your head, telling yourself why you are unhappy and have every right to be unhappy and could not not be unhappy. Everybody would be unhappy in my situation.

One of the thoughts I had since childhood that went on until the age of 29, whenever something went wrong in my life, the thought came, oh yeah, it's got to always happens to me, bad things always happen to me, always. And they did. That was a, at least I knew who I was, or I thought I did, an unhappy me.

And I could have told you many reasons why I had every right to be unhappy. Perhaps everybody in this room could do that. And yet, most of you have stepped out of that already.

But occasionally you get drawn back into the story. Oh. So the only teaching this afternoon is presence, is that state of consciousness.

The state of yes, yes to life, that's all, yes to life, no matter what, yes. And where's life? Here, now, now.

You can wait for the next challenge, or you can do it now. And that's an enormous shift. You no longer need a challenge to wake you up.

You are choosing to wake up. Ultimately, you are not separate from the totality, so you cannot choose. Okay.

There is no separate entity, but you can, with different perspectives, different levels of looking, it is a helpful way of looking at yourself and realize that you can choose to be present now. You can choose to step out of the story of me. You can choose to step out of the heaviness of my past and the anxiety of my future and constant preoccupation with that.

You can choose to say, no, I'm not having this, I'm having this, because only this is real. This is now. And so that choice is there.

If you look more deeply, it may well be that when you perceive this as having choice, at that moment, something greater than you, and yet not separate from you, ultimately you, is moving through you and expressing itself. And then you say, okay, I choose presence. Good.

And then every challenge that comes into your life, suddenly, instead of pulling you back into reaction, which it does usually, you can hold presence for when nothing is happening, everything is fine. As somebody wrote to me, I can be spiritual when I'm sitting alone in a room. But the moment I start interacting with people, I lose it.

And by divine grace, it is a fact that people are difficult, quite often. They're also wonderful if you look deep enough. Beautiful.

But you often have to look deep underneath the surface. First, you have to go underneath the surface in yourself to reach that which is underneath the surface in

others. If you haven't gone deeper than the surface self in yourself, you will be relating to another surface self.

One story relates to another story. And the other story of me may be a competing narrative. Whether you have a big argument, or whether you get out a machine gun, it's only a question of degree.

So this afternoon is the arising of that here. And the mind says, I don't know if it really is arising. How can you be sure that it is arising?

How can you prove that it is really happening? Because, of course, it cannot be understood through thought. The very essence of this arising is something is arising that is deeper than thought.

And in the intermediate stage of this, thought becomes less heavy in your life. Thought loses its capacity to make you unhappy. Thought for a while still goes on with its old records or CDs.

I used to say records, and then one editor crossed it out and put in CD. I hadn't realized that things had changed. But it comes to the same thing.

It's better sound quality, doesn't make much difference as far as this is concerned. I can now hear myself much better. The unhappy story is much more clear now.

So the old records come back sometimes. But an interesting thing happens. You might notice that you're not totally in it anymore.

The same thoughts may still come, but there's a little bit of space between you. In fact, you are the space and the thought. Is this the old thought?

Oh, yeah, that is happening to me, all the bad things that happened to me. And then you may find yourself smiling occasionally. When an old thought, an old interpretation happens of yourself or someone else.

So as this shift happens, thought loses its heaviness and ultimately its capacity to make you unhappy, because nothing really ever makes you unhappy than a thought. And so that's, you have a space between yourself and thought. Or to put more accurately, you, more and more you sense yourself to be a deeper and vaster spaciousness in which occasionally thinking happens.

And then you more than, you will find that new thoughts occasionally come in that are actually creative, fresh, alive, and have a positive contribution to make to this world as an insight, something you say to someone, it just comes out of you. There was no intention. You just say the one thing that this person needs to hear and it comes out of you.

And so that happens more and more that thought loses its power to make you unhappy. And the thought that does occur tends to become inspired and helpful. It is no longer self-invested thinking.

You've stopped looking for an enhanced identity through constructing some new thoughts, through identifying with some new thought form, whether it be a flashy car, which you want to add to myself as a thought form. It's not the car that is added to yourself. It's the thought form that matters, which says, me, I am the Rolls Royce.

It's mine. It gets incorporated into the story of me. And then I got the Rolls Royce.

I made it. I made it. Until after six months, it's not fulfilling.

You're sitting there driving. It's not fulfilling anymore. Maybe that wasn't the right car.

Maybe too many other people have Rolls Royces. Well, if in London they do, then you have to think of something else. I need a different thought form to make me really feel special.

No end to it. That goes. Then thought is fine.

Identity has shifted. Ah, thank you. Our physical bodies may want to move a little bit.

So we will take a break and see if you can just take that presence with you as you walk around, look, even interact. That's a difficult one. It interact with people.

We may talk about that, how that can draw you back into mind and how to stay present in the interaction. We will meet again when the hands on your watch or clock point towards 20 to four, which of course will be the now again. Thank you.

[Speaker 18] (8:06:41 - 8:06:42)

Welcome.

[Speaker 1] (8:06:55 - 8:37:37)

I'm inviting you to be here fully, to inhabit this moment completely. To make yourself at home in this moment, the now, or whatever it is, the now, and it's so normal not to be at home in the now, but to look for your home somewhere else. And that deeply conditioned mind pattern, collective, if it is operating in you at this moment, you will already feel restless or impatient.

And a little voice in the head is saying, come on, get on with it. This need to get on with it is the need to move away from now into future. Looking for your home, for yourself.

A little hint that may make it easier to be here fully. Is to feel a certain connectedness with the inner energy field of the body as you sit here. Simply to, it's not complicated,

simply to sense that the body is alive.

To sense an underlying, this underlying field of aliveness. So some of your attention is there. It's subtle, just, but in a very subtle way.

Yes, of course, the body is alive. Every cell is alive. Every cell is intelligent, more intelligent than the human mind.

So just to sense that. So to inhabit the now, one aspect of being fully present, a very rare state so far on this planet. And one aspect of that is to also to inhabit the body, to be in it, to have some attention in it.

So you're rooted, not totally in the head, not totally in your stream of thoughts, but with some attention in that aliveness that is here. And then it's easier to sit here and listen to a speaker who is not saying very much. Who is giving nothing to believe in, or even arousing your emotions.

Then it's easier to be here with yourself. So we are here to experience the possibility of living in a different state of consciousness from the normal state, which is not to be here. To be identified with a stream of thought, which is always about past and future.

And as you sit here, sensing, even as you listen, that yes, there is an aliveness throughout my body. And you feel that, and there's enough attention left to listen. So you're entering a state of alert presence.

And in that state, you're aware of the words. And in themselves, the words so far have not been very important. Because they point to something, that's all.

In themselves, they are nothing. So you can be here, and allow a state of alert presence to arise. In which you are able to allow this moment, the now, to be.

So I'm inviting you to enter that state of consciousness together. Which, from the point of view of the thinking mind, and from the point of view of that sense of self that is derived from continuous thought activity, a conceptualized me in the head, with its story, its name, its accumulation of experiences. From the point of view of that mind-made self, this state of consciousness is not significant.

It cannot be recognized by thought as significant. Thought is interested in the next thing, not this. Thought is saying, okay, you've been talking about the now for 10 minutes now.

What's next? I want to move on to the next thing. I've come here to be filled up, to be given something, to add something to the content of my mind that I can take home, and it's not coming.

Because nothing needs to be added to you. And to see that, ultimately, to be yourself fully, nothing needs to be added, that's an amazing revelation. Because everybody's

looking to add something to me, to improve me through adding, to make me more complete, the self.

I want to be bigger, more important, more spiritual, more wealthy, more secure, powerful. And if you can't have that, it'll be happy to say, I'm miserable and I want to be even more miserable. It's a mind-made sense of self, a story, happy, unhappy, more unhappy than happy.

And from the point of view of that, this state of consciousness that we are allowing to arise is not significant. Presence, how does that solve my problems? How does that add more to me?

And yet, it solves all your problems. So as we sit here, to continue to feel that inner connectedness with the body, and occasionally detect a little voice in the head that's complaining, uh, uh, uh, not enough, I'm not being fed, give me something to grasp. And of course, usually this is what happens in this building, an institution of learning or education where you're being fed information.

And you're being told many things, taught many things except what really matters. So, even if you notice restlessness arising, notice it, watch that, allow that also to be, allow this moment to be, you might as well because this moment is always as it is. There is a suchness to now, the only place there ever is.

Or if you, that may be, not everybody in this room may know that there's only now. You can remember the past, but only in the now. And what you remember once was the now, otherwise it couldn't have happened.

There would be nothing to remember. So it's the, the power, the light of now that gives life to the past and the future, a mental projection. Some project it now, one day, this is going to happen tomorrow.

When it comes, it's not the future anymore. It's the now. And you can only project a future now.

You can only think of a future now. When it comes, it comes as the now. So this is an important realization because we are moving into the now and it's good to see how vital that is because it is life itself.

And humans live as if the now were totally, not only insignificant, they live trying to get away from it. Always, except for rare moments and, ah, I have arrived. But you never arrive for very long and then you realize you haven't arrived.

I've made it. Oh, no, I haven't made it. So present moment awareness is why we are here.

Not to acquire new ideas. To allow that state that one could call awareness, now awareness, which is a new state of consciousness for human beings, allow that to arise. And something in you loves it and responds to it.

And something else in you would rather be somewhere else and is saying, this isn't getting me anywhere. And one or two or more of you may leave because you're not being given content for the mind. And so you can go from here maybe to a lecture at a higher place of learning and you will get all that.

Lecture on Buddhist philosophy, so much to learn. And yet the essence is so amazingly simple. So as we sit here, we settle into now.

And if something within doesn't feel settled in the now, you notice that. Maybe a little notch in the chest, a little heaviness here. You notice that.

And allow that, an openness. You bring an openness to now. Instead of arguing with now or trying to run away from it.

So present moment awareness arises, which is a state of great intelligence. All creativity comes out of that. That state is known by anyone who has achieved mastery in any field.

In that field of mastery, he or she is able to access that state of consciousness where you are no longer dependent on the accumulated knowledge, although that may come into play. You're not dependent on the accumulated knowledge of the mind where newness can come in, a new creation, a new insight, realization, fresh, new, alive. That cannot be created by the human mind.

The human mind can be a tool in giving that form, but it cannot be derived from the human mind, which is a kind of a computer. It stores information. It analyzes information.

It distinguishes between this and this and that. As that, it works quite well. But creative comes from a deeper place of where the one intelligence that expresses itself in form as the universe, where that resides in each human being, that one intelligence that is far greater than the conditioned little intelligence of the mind.

It encompasses it, but it's far greater. And that is accessible in every human being as that state of consciousness of presence. And anybody who has achieved mastery in any field is familiar with that state, even if they don't know it, they may not be able to talk about it, but they sit and an alertness arises.

They're not trying to get away from this moment. Oh, I need to get there. There's total attention to the field of now.

And then the creative impulse comes or the creative insight happens. And then perhaps

at that stage, the mind gives it expressions, perhaps through words or some movement happens for the artist or even to the scientist. The problem he's been thinking about for hundreds of hours, suddenly he or she enters the state of aware presence in which thought mind activity subsides, but you don't lose consciousness at all.

There's full awakened consciousness. Unconditioned, it has nothing to do with your past. It can arise at any point in your life.

Sometimes it arises accidentally when people are faced with death or a very dangerous situation that the mind could not cope with. And then the mind steps aside and that intelligence takes over while that critical situation lasts. And then people admire you and say, you did such a great thing and you realize you didn't do anything.

It happened. I didn't do anything. I just did it.

I don't know. You are a hero. Well, no, I didn't do anything.

So that human beings here and there have tasted that, but it has never arisen on the planet as a new state of consciousness, not collectively. It's happened to a few individuals here and there. And in many cases, only in the isolated field of their activity, those who created great things.

And then as a way of habitual state of consciousness for a few so-called masters who dwell in that new state, but it is the destiny of all humans to become masters, to be masters, to embody that transformed consciousness. That's why we are here. So that needs to be seen how important it is for you to allow that state to arise.

And it wants to arise. The intelligence wants to move through this form and flower through this form. Humanity on the whole has not yet flowered.

A few flowers here and there, Buddha, Jesus, many of them misunderstood and a few that we don't know about. And a few partial flowers, great artists, for example. Partial flowers because they were not yet able to live in that state, but they had access to it in their field of endeavor.

And now, because we're arriving at a very critical stage on this planet, this state needs to arise in humans as the next evolutionary step for mankind. We can't get out of our problems on the same level of consciousness that created the problems, neither on a personal level nor on a collective level. Accumulating more information, more facts, memorize more facts, is that going to solve humanity's problems?

Analysis. It's still the same state of consciousness in which you're identified with a mind-made image that is never fulfilled for long, and it needs more. It needs its enemies because it defines its sense of me through others.

And it feels stronger in its illusory sense of self, me, my story, my name, my history. Humans don't know themselves beyond that. And that covers up that which is unconditioned in each human being, the unconditioned consciousness, because they're totally identified with the conditioned, derive their sense of self from that.

And so why we are here is to allow that unconditioned to arise. And this gathering here is part of the transformation of human consciousness. I'm not giving you some new idea that says, it's all going to change at some future point.

It's changing already. Otherwise, you wouldn't be here if you were not, if that change were not operating through you, you wouldn't be here. Except one or two who got dragged here against their will.

You must come to this and listen. I don't want to listen to this. But sometimes, even those who got dragged to a gathering suddenly listen.

Oh, they recognize something as if they had known it. But this does not, let's not mislead ourselves and make this into a new interesting idea to believe in. And that idea would be consciousness is changing.

I believe that now, that's not enough. You've only strengthened your sense of self by identifying with a new belief and perhaps feeling a little bit more important now, because it's changing through me. And you will know that this is the case when somebody that you meet after this gathering, maybe your partner, your parents or a friend, and you'd say something about it and they say, no, that's not happiness, it's just nonsense.

And you get defensive. Oh, what are you defending? Yourself, a mental position.

It's become a mental position. And mental positions need to be defended. When you identify with a mental position, you derive your sense of self from that mental position.

You need to defend yourself. I'm right. No, you're wrong.

With a lot of emotional violence sometimes. So we're not making it into some new mind stuff. It's easy to happen.

This is how religions arise. At the core of it, there is a deep truth. And then the mind comes in.

And makes it into something to believe in. And to argue with and make others wrong and make yourself right. Oh, great.

Killing others to show that you are right. In that delusion, to make somebody else wrong can be a war on a collective level. Religious war, nationalistic war.

What on a personal level is making someone wrong. The need to be right. Identifying

with thought.

Completely. That is coming to an end. And what arises is a state of consciousness that one cannot really talk about.

Because all the words are created by the mind. It's a miracle that one talks about it. The words, however, are not it.

They are only pointers. And if you're trying to understand what I'm pointing to, you won't. It can only be known directly.

How? Allow this moment to be as it is. Align yourself with now.

This is how we started. And this is the central core of our gathering. Is to align yourself internally with now.

It does not mean that you now become lethargic and no action will ever happen again. The opposite is true. It is a state that is both deeply at rest and if needed, dynamic.

That state of alignment with now will respond immediately to whatever challenge presents itself in your life at this moment. Action will arise out of that state. Out of that intelligence that is in that state.

And that far more effective action than action that comes out of the state of denial of now and needs to arrive at some future point to make myself bigger. To get somewhere. To achieve anger, restlessness.

Not enough. I have to make it. So to become familiar with that incredible state of unconditioned presence, which is the state that...

Nothing else is the whole teachings in Zen. And some of you have read books about Zen or even practiced Zen. And it's usually regarded as very enigmatic teaching.

You can't quite figure out what they're talking about. People spend years studying, trying to figure out what are they actually saying? And there's some deep, some obscure sense that there's something important here, but I continue to miss it.

And there are even monks in Zen monasteries who miss it. And it's so simple. It's all embodied.

It's all expressed in the beautiful gesture of the Zen master who would only ever give one answer to the question, what is Zen? And that his answer was wordless. It was this.

[Speaker 18] (8:37:48 - 8:37:49)

Oh.

[Speaker 1] (8:38:06 - 9:00:12)

And more people got it through this Zen master than other Zen masters who gave verbal explanations or would hit you with a stick. That's another method. And if they didn't get it when he did that, and he looked very fierce, the way Zen masters look, it shocks you into awakening.

But those who didn't get it, they said, did you hear my question? It didn't work. To become familiar, and I haven't very often gone into it as I'm doing this evening.

You must be ready for it. Otherwise, it wouldn't be happening. What arises in humans, in you now, is something amazing.

It is both simple and profound and amazing, and an amazing evolutionary leap. And what is that? It is the state of, and now please don't be frightened.

It is the state of no thought. It is the state without loss of consciousness. Instead, an enormous intensification of consciousness compared to which the state of thought is a dream-like state, as particularly the state of being identified with thought continuously with that stream of mental noise, which is still the normal state, is a dream-like state compared to the state of being free of thought.

Not that thought will never again arise, but you become familiar with that state in which there is a simple, clear space of alert presence. And the mind is not labeling what is. The allowing is so deep that it is not necessary to interpret this moment.

A greater intelligence than the little conditioned intelligence that is labeling or interpreting this moment now comes into operation. But from the point of view of the mind, the labeling intelligence, the analytical information-gathering mind, from the point of view of that, the state of no thought looks as if you didn't know anything anymore, and it's frightened of that state. And the amazing thing is, in many of you, because that state, it is an evolutionary universal impulse, that state wants to arise through humans now, and in many of you it is already arising at all kinds of moments, but it's often not recognized for what it is, because the mind cannot recognize it.

You can't do anything. There's nothing there for the mind. The mind is object consciousness.

It is consciousness with content. You're conscious. The mind is always identified with some content, thought forms, some form.

And when you walk through the city, you can see how the mind is either commenting on what you see, even that is rare, because most of the time, the mind is totally elsewhere, and you just have just enough awareness not to bump into people. You're just peripherally aware of your surroundings, just enough, but otherwise you're thinking

about something much more important than this moment. And of course, it's some form of next moment, so much more important, but you need to get there as quickly as possible.

That's normal. And it's easy, so easy to overlook that this state is already arising in you, but it's immediately obscured again by mental noise. So one thing that you can do is to watch the arising of the state that is free of thought.

It is a state of simple, clear, alert presence. It is alert, but relaxed at the same time. And that is the essence of who you are, is that field of aware presence.

It can only be now, that is inseparable from now. That is actually the essence of now, of what now means. There is a now that is associated with objects that arise in the now.

That's mind, thoughts, sense perceptions, people, situations, events. They arise, objects in consciousness arise. Most humans only know themselves as an object in consciousness.

They only know themselves as a story that they are telling themselves, my past. Who are you? The name, which is a sequence of sounds, not much more.

I am John Smith. Oh, okay, now I know. And then there's a role that is an object in consciousness that you identify with.

Society has given you maybe two or three roles. You ask, who are you? You get the name as an answer.

Then you get, I'm a mother of three. I'm an accountant. I'm a divorcee.

I'm unemployed. I'm a professor of such and such, or whatever it may be. Or I'm somebody who's been treated unfairly by life, all his life.

Let me tell you about it. And so that's all people know. Mind objects, they derive their sense of identity from mind objects, thoughts, an accumulation of certain thoughts and images in the mind.

And that becomes a me. Now, the reason why people cannot stop thinking, it seems that they can't, but they can as the new consciousness is arising. But it's compulsive still to a large extent.

Thought is compulsive. Everybody, in almost everybody, the stream of thinking, they don't, I must think. Think, think, think, think all day long.

You must think about something. Even when there's nothing to think about, you must think, think. And psychologists examine that.

Even psychologists who are not aware of that there's a new consciousness arising, or if you told them that, they would say, come to me for treatment. But even psychologists, they have examined the nature of thought and what kinds of thoughts go through people's heads. And they've come to the conclusion in several studies that 98% of, or 99% of thought activity is totally repetitive.

The same thoughts go through your head again and again. But the mind is telling you, this is terribly important. I'm, I need to take responsibility for my life.

These are big problems that I'm thinking about. And you have no time for presence. The problems are too important for that.

And you can see the absence when you look into people's eyes sometimes. You can see there's nobody there. They are not here.

They are in some, it's the, they're not really looking. The look is inwards. It's, it's all, all their consciousness is absorbed by thought.

And that's where their attention is. It's, it can't go out. It goes back in.

And there's no emanation. There's no energy coming out of them. It's like a thick veil has descended.

And when you look, you can clearly see that they are somewhere totally different. A mind projection. Future, probably.

Unless they're so old, there's little future left, in which case they'll live in the past. And the strange thing is, you are fooling yourself that your thinking serves a useful purpose, that it's actually there to figure out how to solve your problems. But it's actually creating far more problems than solving.

The amazing thing is, useless thinking is the place where problems are being created. There is no problem here, now. Now I can hear one or two minds saying, surely the world is full of problems and dreadful things are happening at this very moment.

Are you telling me that that's all an illusion? No. Of course dreadful things are happening at this moment.

And that's because it is an externalization of the normal human state of consciousness, which is very dysfunctional now, especially in its final stage. That is very dysfunctional. So enormous problems, yes.

But are we solving them? The peace process, another peace process, and more bombs, and more peace process, and more bombs. It's only from a different state of consciousness that these things can be solved.

Now let's look at your own life, which seems that your identity is partly, consists of problems. The sense of who you feel you are, an essential ingredient in that sense of me, my life situation, my past, my possible future, if there is one, because you can never be sure. My past, my future, that I hope there is a future.

Because I need to complete my story and make it work. It's not really working yet. Not yet.

But any day now, this is actually going to work. That's a strange thing that it doesn't really work in anybody, not for very long. And then again, it's, oh, because the story cannot give you a satisfying sense of self.

It is only content in the head. So it's never satisfying for long. You never complete yourself in it.

And even if the world thinks you have, when you look into these people who seem to have made it, and even scientists, you realize that even they often think, no, I haven't really solved the ultimate problem yet. Even Einstein, who was a deeply, very much in touch with his inner being more than most other scientists, hadn't arrived at the, hadn't worked out the entire secret of the universe, whatever it was, the unified field theory, or whatever it was called, he couldn't work that out. But the world, to the world, he was the greatest of scientists, and he was, because he had access to that.

And yet, on the level of his story, it didn't have seemed to work out either, because he couldn't figure out the ultimate secret of the universe. So the story, in it's, cannot work structurally. In the very structure of that sense of self is contained the element of unsatisfactoriness of not working, not satisfying you, not, not completing you.

So it's great to see that, oh, that means your life situation is no longer all absorbing. It does not absorb your entire attention anymore. It is a desperate search to make it, to arrive, to attain, and that goes.

And then you realize there's something far more vital than your life situation. Not that you don't honor it, as your situation unfolds in time. You have a role in relation to society, temporary roles, you honor that without seeking yourself in it.

You play the role of mother for a while without being totally identified with the role. Then you become a stifling mother. But if you can play, you can honor your role beautifully without being absorbed in it and deriving your sense of identity from it and thinking that's who I am because the role comes to an end.

The chairman of the big corporation retires and then he sits there and the phone doesn't ring anymore and nobody tells him who he is anymore. And he had never inquired more deeply before. It's sometimes a little late when you reach old age and you have never inquired more deeply into who you are beyond objects in consciousness.

So here arises that which in ancient traditions is sometimes called the self, not the little self, the Atman, the one universal intelligence that is the essence of your identity. It arises as simple thoughtless awareness. One could say stillness.

That's only a small aspect of it. It is an inner field of stillness and yet it is so alert. And when you find for the first time there are moments when you can look upon something, perhaps some in nature, perhaps it is a tree, a flower, you perceive it and it is not being labeled by the mind.

That is the arising of thoughtless awareness. There is a knowing in that but it is very different from what the thinking mind calls knowing. And you haven't lost the labels.

If a label should be needed, it's there but it's no longer absorbing all your attention, the conceptualized world of labels. So, so far humans have lived not only in a conceptualized sense of self in the head but the moment you live in a conceptualized sense of self in the head, you inhabit a conceptualized reality. In other words, whatever you come into contact with is immediately made into mental concepts.

It is immediately judged, interpreted and labeled according to the conditioning of the conceptualized mind and the self that is in here, the me. So people go through life, every situation they immediately interpret it, judge it, classify it, comment on it internally, often complain about it, dislike it. So, and this is called intelligence.

And at school, the children who are very quick to label things, they are called the good pupils. The best pupils are the ones who can immediately come up with an answer and can retain information and spit it out quickly. Best student in class, the hand goes up always immediately, I have the answer.

And then you have others who are slower and the teacher asks the question and those are the children in whom this new consciousness often is already rising. And there is not an immediate label there because the question is actually quite deep and so it falls into the depths and the pupil or the student just looks. And then the teacher says, okay, you don't know obviously.

And it's often even Einstein was not very good at school, there was too much depth, he couldn't immediately produce good results in exams. So that's the amazing thing which to the mind looks not important, how is that going to solve my problems? You look at a flower, you look at a tree, you look at the sky or anything and the perception arises in a field of alert stillness.

It doesn't matter how long, it's a timeless moment now.

[Speaker 18] (9:00:14 - 9:00:15)

And maybe after three seconds.

